The University of Texas Publication

No. 4026 July 8, 1940

STUDIES IN ENGLISH
1940

PUBLISHED BY
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
AUSTIN

Publications of The University of Texas

The University publishes bulletins four times a month, so numbered that the first two digits of the number show the year of issue and the last two the position in the yearly series. (For example, No. 4001 is the first publication of the year 1940.) These bulletins comprise the official publications of the University, publications on humanistic and scientific subjects, and bulletins issued from time to time by various divisions of the University. The following bureaus and divisions distribute publications issued by them; communications concerning publications in these fields should be addressed to The University of Texas, Austin, Texas, care of the bureau or division issuing the publication: Bureau of Business Research, Bureau of Economic Geology, Bureau of Engineering Research, Bureau of Industrial Chemistry, Bureau of Public School Extracurricular Activities, and Division of Extension. Communications concerning all other publications of the University should be addressed to University Publications, The University of Texas.

Additional copies of this publication may be procured from the University Publications, The University of Texas, Austin, Texas, at $1.00 per copy

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS PRESS

The University of Texas Publication
No. 4026: July 8, 1940

STUDIES IN ENGLISH
1940

PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY FOUR TIMES A MONTH AND ENTERED AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER AT THE POST OFFICE AT AUSTIN, TEXAS, UNDER THE ACT OF AUGUST 24, 1912

The benefits of education and of useful knowledge, generally diffused through a community, are essential to the preservation of a free government.

Sam Houston

Cultivated mind is the guardian genius of Democracy, and while guided and controlled by virtue, the noblest attribute of man. It is the only dictator that freemen acknowledge, and the only security which freemen desire.

Mirabeau B. Lamar.

CONTENTS

CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN

AS A YOUNG WOMAN

From the Harvard Theatre Collection
Photograph of a Miniature

AN OLD ENGLISH *MAGNIFICAT*

BY RUDOLPH WILLARD

The thirteenth Blickling Homily is a sizable piece relating with much circumstantial detail the death, the resurrection from the dead, and assumption bodily into Heaven, of Mary the mother of Jesus.[1] This particular tenth-century English version of Mary's departure from this earthly life is, as I have shown elsewhere,[2] of a composite character: basically, it is of the translation type, according to which Mary's body is raised from the grave, is borne by angels to Paradise, and there is reunited with her soul; but the Blickling account has been reshaped through fusion with a story of the resurrection type, in which the body is raised from the dead, and there, at the grave, is forthwith repossessed of its soul, after which the living entity, body and soul, is taken to heaven.

The Blickling redaction rounds off the story of Mary's translation to heaven with an unusual version of the *Magnificat*, somewhat farsed by blending with the Beatitudes. For this conclusion there is no precedent in the sources: at least, not in any version of *Transitus C*, or of any other *Transitus* that I have had opportunity to examine.[3]

---

[1]Richard Morris, *The Blickling Homilies* (*Early English Text Society*, LVIII, LXIII, LXXVIII), London, 1874–1880, pp. 136–159.

[2]Rudolph Willard, "The Two Accounts of the Assumption in Blickling Homily XIII," in *The Review of English Studies*, XIV, 1938, pp. 1–19.

[3]For the term *Transitus* to designate a Latin version of the Assumption, and for the letters B, C, etc., see *Review of English Studies*, XIV, p. 2, note 2. *Transitus B*, the best known of the Latin versions, was printed by Constantius Tischendorf, *Apocalypses Apocryphae*, Leipzig, 1866, pp. 124–136. Montague Rhodes James gives an English translation of this in his *The Apocryphal New Testament*, Oxford, 1924, pp. 209–216. A full text of *Transitus C*, the Latin version underlying Blickling Homily XIII, was brought out in 1933 by Dom Wilmart (see below, note 6), but it has not, so far as I know, been printed in English. It may be got at in English,

The Blickling Assumption story is remarkable for its amazing treatment of its Latin original, for its frequent reversal of meaning, for its curious inability to follow the thread of the narrative, particularly in long passages of reported action, and for its strange readings, suggesting that the Old English translator possessed inadequate Latinity, and that, in addition, he worked from a Latin text already corrupt and difficult to read.[4] This state of affairs is not confined to the more remote and less familiar portions of the Assumption story, but it extends to the *Magnificat* and to the Beatitudes as well. These two passages are, surely, among the more popularly known parts of the Gospels: the former because of its prominence in the liturgy as the hymn of evensong, the latter because of its importance in Christian ethics and conduct. In the Greek Church, indeed, the Beatitudes themselves possess liturgical significance, holding a special place in the eucharistic liturgy.[5] Our modern familiarity with the *Magnificat* and the Beatitudes makes us marvel at the treatment afforded them in the Old English. One would suppose them to have been familiar also to Anglo-Saxon Christians, particularly to literate Christians; but their form in this Old English text astonishes with its evidence of the frequent misunderstanding that prevails as to the very spirit and content of these pieces. The morphological features of the Latin seem to have been as ineffectual with that Anglo-Saxon translator a millennium ago as

---

however, though in a rather baffling fashion, through Morris's modern English rendering of the Blickling text (see above, note 1). The most convenient anthology of Assumption stories is that afforded by James, *Apocryphal New Testament*, pp. 194–227. For later materials, see *Review of English Studies*, XIV, the notes to pp. 1–4.

[4]See the various notes, *Review of English Studies*, XIV, pp. 9–16. These features are not all to be credited to the translator, for a subsequent scribe, exercising editorial prerogative, must have had a share in the evolution of our Old English text. See below, p. 22f.

[5]See Joseph Braun, *Liturgisches Handlexikon*, Regensburg, 1924, s.v. *makarismoi, enarksis,* and *typikon.*

they are with the schoolboy of today. Indications of number, gender, person, mood, case, voice, and tense are disregarded as though they had not been. These features of the Old English are not confined to the closing passus of this homily, but they prevail throughout. Only a detailed comparison of the Old English with that superb Latin text of *Transitus C* published a few years back by Dom Wilmart,[6] can make fully clear the extent to which the Anglo-Saxon redaction is shot through with inaccuracy. In this paper I purpose to set forth the *Magnificat* passus from this Assumption homily, and I shall comment on the Old English, throwing what light I can on its readings.

Our Old English text of *Transitus C* is preserved in two codices: the *Blickling Manuscript,* pages 166–194, and *MS Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, 198,* folios 350r–359r.[7] As the Blickling text has been available for some three score years, in Richard Morris's excellent edition,[8] I have chosen to print for this study the Old English from the variant copy in the Cambridge manuscript, thereby affording access to both texts.

MS Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, 198 is one of a group of Old English codices which, because of the presence in them of certain glosses in a wavering script, are held to have passed under the hand of a glossator believed to have lived in Worcester.[9] These glosses I set

---

[6]Dom André Wilmart, *Analecta Reginensia* (*Testi è Studi*, LIX), Vatican City, 1933, pp. 323–357: "L'Ancien Récit Latin de l'Assomption."

[7]For a description of this manuscript, see Montague Rhodes James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge*, Cambridge, 1912, I. 475–481.

[8]See above, note 1. A minute study of the two Old English texts throughout, and in relation to Wilmart's Latin text (see above, note 6), makes one appreciate fully the great accuracy of Morris's editing, and his skill, wisdom, and forbearance, in handling so difficult, even baffling, a text as Blickling Homily XIII.

[9]See James, *Catalogue*, I. pp. 33 and 475, Samuel J. Crawford, "The Worcester Marks and Glosses of the Old English Manuscripts of the Bodleian," in *Anglia*, LII, 1928, pp. 1–25, and Neil R. Ker, "The Date of the 'Tremulous' Worcester Hand," in *Leeds Studies in English*

forth in the manuscript notes for the words with which they occur, as they are occasionally of interest in showing how an earlier, though post Anglo-Saxon time read our manuscript. Each gloss is to be assumed as superscript unless otherwise specified.

The Corpus Christi manuscript, like other Worcester books,[10] shows a series of diacritical marks inserted superscript throughout the codex in early Middle English times. These indicate the contemporary pronunciation where, from the point of view of this reviser, it differed from that called for by the Old English orthography. The marks occurring within the passus under our scrutiny are the following:

1. A short thin vertical stroke above the ȝ of initial *ȝe—*; to indicate the change of OE *ȝe—* to ME *i—*: *ȝemyccla* 58.1,[11] *ȝedo* 58.2, 3, *ȝefylde* 58.8, *ȝehyton* 58.8, *ȝeȝearwode* 58.8, *ȝemindiȝ* 58.9, *ȝestte* 58.9, *ȝewurðe* 58.11, *ȝefrefrede* 58.14; see *Anglia,* LII, pp. 2 and 15, §26γ.
2. An *e* above *y,* indicating southeastern unrounding and lowering of *y* to *e*: *ȝefylde* 58.8; see *Anglia,* LII, pp. 4 and 7, §7β.
3. An *a* over *i* of *him,* indicating LOE *heom* > ME *ham;* 58.5 and 11; see *Anglia,* LII, pp. 4 and 11, §16δ.
4. A real *w,* not an open *wen,* above OE *wen: wið* 58.15; see *Anglia,* LII, p. 4.

In printing the Old English, I shall observe the punctuation of the manuscript, for it indicates how the scribe, at least, understood, at any rate designated, the rhetorical divisions of his text. I admit that this is a sort of *tour de force,* and at best an unsatisfactory substitute for the

---

and Kindred Languages, VI, Leeds, 1937, pp. 28–29. See also Wolfgang Keller, *Die Litterarischen Bestrebungen von Worcester in Angel-Sächsischen Zeit* (*Quellen und Forschungen,* LXXXIV, 1900), p. 20.

[10]See Crawford, "Worcester Marks," *Anglia,* LII, 1–25.

[11]These numbers after the readings indicate the chapter and verse divisions of the text as printed below, pp. 10–16.

manuscript. I attempt it, however, not that I may avoid the responsibilities of editorship, but because I have found these manuscript punctuation marks of definite help in interpreting this text.

I arrange the texts in two columns, giving in one the Old English from *MS CCCC 198*, and in the other the *Vulgate* reading of the *Magnificat* and of the Beatitudes. A translation of both into modern English is disposed at the bottom of each page. The temptation with regard to the Latin is to use the Prayer Book version, because of its familiarity; but since this very familiarity sometimes predisposes one to miss the real significance of the passage in question, I have occasionally translated directly from the Vulgate, and in one instance I had recourse to the Greek before I felt satisfied as to the intention of the Latin. With regard to the Old English, I have translated directly, using Morris's Englishing for comparison only. Comment on the readings I reserve for the notes which follow the text. The variant readings from Blickling are given directly after the Worcester glosses. I disregard those variants which differ only in the use of *ð* and *þ*. For convenience in reference, I have followed Dom Wilmart's practice with regard to the Latin text of *Transitus C*, in dividing the Old English text into chapter and verse; I have observed in this regard the Latin tags in the Old English *Magnificat* and the modern verse division of the Beatitudes.

The point at which I take up the Old English text is the moment after the full restoration to life of Mary's body. After death, her body had, according to Christ's instructions, been laid in the tomb, where a three-days' vigil was kept by the apostles. On the third day Christ reappeared; He greeted His apostles, and asked them their will with regard to His mother. They replied that, since He had risen from the dead, and, in the body, was existing in heaven, it would be fitting that He raise His mother from the dead, that she might also enjoy bodily immortality in heaven, and thus anticipate the destiny of the blessed after the General Resurrection. Their request was in accordance

with Christ's will. At His command, an angel rolled the stone away from the tomb, and the psychopomp angel brought back Mary's soul from the habitations of the righteous in Paradise. At Christ's word, Mary's body arose, like that of Lazarus, from the dead, and came forth from the tomb. Her soul was restored to her body. She thereupon fell down and blessed the Lord. Christ then bade the angels bear her to Paradise. The account of the Assumption continues thus:

MS CCCC 198[12]	Transitus B[13]
57.3. 7 drihten cwæð to ðæm engłum. Singað nu. 7 onfoð minre meder on neorxna-wange.	3. Et statim cum haec dixisset dominus, elevatus in nube receptus est in caelum,
4. 7 ða apostolas on heora mægene hofon Marian lichoman up mid wolcnum. 7 hine ða asetton on neorxna-wanges[a] gefean	4. et angeli cum eo, deferentes beatam Mariam in paradisum dei.
5. 7 nu syndon gesette ða apostolas in hlet-æ hie bodian hire.	5. Apostolis autem susceptis in nubibus, reversi sunt unusquisque in sortem praedicationis suae.

[a]MS *neorxnawandes*, with punctum delens under *d*, and *g* inserted superscript by original scribe.

Variant readings from Blickling: 4 hofon] hofan.

[12]Folio 358r, line 20. I am depending on photostats for the Old English readings.

[13]Here the Old English has left its main source, *Transitus C* (see above, note 6), and is following matter most conveniently illustrated

CCCC 198	Transitus B
57.3. And the Lord said to the angels, "Sing now, and receive my mother into Paradise."	57.3. And immediately, when the Lord had said this, he was taken up in a cloud, and was received into heaven,
4. And the apostles in their might raised up Mary's body with clouds, and they set it in the joys of Paradise.	4. and the angels with him, carrying the blessed Mary into the Paradise of God.
5. And now the apostles are set down in their lot, that they should proclaim her.[16]	5. But the apostles, being taken up in clouds, were returned each one to the lot of his preaching.

That is, the apostles were returned each to the place whither he had originally been sent to preach the gospel, and whence three days before Mary's death he had been taken up in a cloud by divine dispensation to be present at her death.[14] The choice of preaching station, as determined for each apostle by divine will, had been revealed to him by the casting of lots. This is made clear in the opening passus of *Transitus B:* "And when the apostles had taken the world by their lots for preaching, she [*Mary*] abode in the house of his [*John's*] parents beside the Mount of Olivet."[15] The problems with regard to the Old English in this particular verse are not our immediate concern; I have touched on them elsewhere.[16] The misunderstandings of the Latin evident in the Old English are, be it remarked again, characteristic of that version as a whole.

Transitus B comes to a close with the usual *qui vivit et regnat* formula, but the Old English makes an abrupt transition to the *Magnificat,* utilizing from *Transitus B* the *narrantes magnalia dei* to effect this. The Old English and the Latin continue:

CCCC 198	Transitus B
58.1. 7 we nu *and*detton Godes mycelnesse 7 sinȝan on Marian naman:—[*fol. 358v*] *Magnificat anima mea.*[b] forðon heo ðus cwæð ða heo maȝnificat sanȝ. Min drihten ȝemyccla mine saule.	58.1. narrantes magnalia dei et laudantes dominum nostrum Iesum Christum, qui vivit et regnat cum patre et spiritu sancto in unitate perfecta et in una divinitatis substantia, in saecula

[a]*7detton,* underscored and glossed *con*fiteamur.

[b]The Latin tags in CCCC 198 show underscorings which, according to the photostats, appear to be made by a metal pen.

Variant readings: 1 7[1]] ond onddetton] ondetton maȝnificat[2]] maȝnificaþ ȝemyccla] ȝemycla saule] sauwle.

from *Transitus B,* the pertinent passages from which I quote from Tischendorf's *Apocalypses Apocryphae,* p. 136; see also *Review of English Studies,* XIV, 18–19.

[14]James, *Apocryphal New Testament,* pp. 202–205.

[15]*Ibid.,* p. 210.

[16]*Review of English Studies,* XIV, pp. 18–19.

saeculorum. Amen. [Transitus B *ends here*] Magnificat anima mea dominum,

2. *Et exultauit.* 7 ȝedo þæt min ȝast wynsumiȝe[c] on ðinre hælo. forðon ðe ðu eart soð ȝod.

2. Et exultavit spiritus meus in deo salutari meo.

3. *Quia rexpecsit.*[d] forðon ðu nu sceawa ðines mæȝenes[e] eaðmodnesse 7 min drihten cwæð *Sancte*[d] Marie[d] ȝedo ðu þæt eall cyn cweðe. þæt ic sy seo eadiȝoste fæmne.

3. Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae; ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes.

4. *Quia fecit.* forðon ðu me dydest mycel. 7 ðu eart mihtiȝ 7 ðin nama haliȝ.

4. Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est, et sanctum nomen eius.

5. *Et misericordia eius.* 7 ðin mildheortnes is mid eallum ðæm cynne. ðe ðe him ondrædað.

5. Et misericordia eius a progenie in progenies timentibus eum.

6. *fecit potentiam.* 7 he dyde mycle mihte on his earan[f] 7 he todælde[g] ealle ða ðe ðær wæron ofermode[h] on heora heortan 7 noldon on hine ȝetrywan.[i]

6. Fecit potentiam in brachio suo; dispersit superbos mento cordis sui.

[c]Glossed *exult*auit. [d]So in MS. [e]Glossed *virtutem*. [f]So in MS; glossed *brachio*. [g]Glossed in margin *dispersit*. [h]Glossed *superbos*. [i]Glossed con*fidere*.

Variant readings: 3. rexpecsit] respexit mæȝenes] *so too Bl; Morris emends to read* mæȝdenes cyn] cynn eadiȝoste] eadȝoste 4. quia] qui. 5. eius] *om. Bl* 6. earan] *so too Bl; Morris emends to read* earman noldon] noldan.

58.1. And let us now confess God's greatness, and sing for Mary's sake, *Magnificat anima mea,* because she thus said, when she sang *Magnificat;* "My Lord, magnify my soul.

58.1. relating the great things of God, and praising our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with the Father and with the Holy Spirit, in perfect unity and in one substance of the godhead, world without end. Amen. My soul doth magnify the Lord,

2. *Et exultatuit:* "and bring it to pass that my spirit rejoice in thy salvation, because thou art the true God.

2. And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my salvation.

3. *Quia respexit:* "Wherefore, behold thou now the humility of

3. For he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden, for

7. *deposuit.* 7 he asette ða mihtiȝan of heora setle. 7 þæt wæs Satanas mid his deoflum[a]: ða he wæs on heofona-rice. 7 he ða for his oferhyȝdun[b] 7 his deoflum[c] mid him wurdon aworpene on helle ȝrund[d]. 7 drihten ealle eað-mode up-ahefð on ecnesse.

7. Deposuit potentes de sede, et exaltavit humiles.

8. *Esurientes.* 7 ða wæs Sancta Maria cweðende. þæt drihten ealle ða ȝefylde on heofona wuldres fæȝernesse. ða ðe hie on eorðan leton hinȝrian 7 ðyrstan for his naman. 7 elle[e] ða men ða ðe onfenȝon welon. 7 on oferfylle swiðor ȝehyhton[f] ðonne on God: 7 hie sylfe swa forleton on idelnesse. ðonne ȝeȝearwode he ðæm ece forwyrde.[g]

8. Esurientes implevit bonis, (Beati qui esuriunt et sitiunt justitiam, quoniam ipsi saturabuntur. *Matt.* 5.6.)

et divites dimisit inanes.

[a]A mark like a colon inserted after *deoflum.* [b]So in MS; read *oferhyȝdum* with Bl. Glossed *superbia.* [c]So too Bl; read *deoflu* with Morris. [d]Scribe wrote *drund,* but corrected the error by deleting d^1 with punctum delens, and by inserting ȝ superscript. [e]So in MS; read *ealle* with Bl. [f]Glossed *sperauerunt.* [g]Glossed *interitum.*

Variant readings: 7. heofona] heofena oferhyȝdun] oferhyȝdū 8. elle] ealle welon] welan.

---

thy strength [*read* handmaiden; *see p. 24*]. And, my Lord," said Saint Mary, "do thou bring it to pass that every generation say that I am the most blessed Virgin.

behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

4. *Quia fecit:* "For thou hast made me great [*possibly,* done a great thing for me], and thou art mighty, and thy name holy.

4. For he that is mighty hath done great things for me, and holy is his name.

5. *Et misercordia eius:* "And thy mercy is with that whole generation, that which fears thee [*possibly,* is afraid].

5. And his mercy is from generation to generation on them that fear him.

6. *Fecit potentiam:* "And he hath performed great might on his ear [*read* arm; *see p. 25*], and he hath scattered all those who

6. He hath showed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their heart.

9. *Suscepit Israel.* 7 Israel onfehð eallum his cnihtum 7 wæs ȝemindiȝ ealra his mildheortnesse. swa Matheus wæs cweðende. þæt drihten astiȝe on sume tid on anne munt [*fol. 359r*] mid myccle werode[a] his haliȝra. 7 ða ȝesette[b] he on ðæm munte.

9. Suscepit Israel puerum suum, recordatus misericordiae eius. (Videns autem Jesus turbas, ascendit in montem, et cum sedisset,

10. *Sicut locutus est.* 7 ða eodan his þeȝnas to him. 7 ða ontynde[c] se Hælend his muð.[d] 7 wæs sprecende to urum fæderum 7 to Abrahame. 7 wæs cweðende. þæt his sæd oferweoxe ealle ðas woruld.

10. acesserunt ad eum discipuli eius, et aperiens os suum, *Matt.* 5.1–2)
sicut locutus est ad patres nostros, Abraham, et semini eius in saecula, *Luke* 1.55. [End of *Magnificat*]

11. 7 he lærde his apostolas[e] 7 him sæȝde ðurh hwæt saul[f] eadeȝust[g] ȝewurde. 7 ðus cwæð.

11. (et docebat eas, dicens,

[a]Glossed *turbe.* [b]Glossed *sedit.* [c]Glossed *aperuit.* [d]A point inserted after *muð.* [e]A point inserted after *apostolas.* [f]Glossed *anima.* [g]Glossed *beatior.*

Variant readings: 9. Israel[2]] *Morris prints* Israhel ealra] ealre werode] weorode ȝesette] ȝesæt 10. se] *om. Bl.* ussum] urum weoruld] woruld 11. saul] seo saul.

---

were proud in their heart, and would not trust in him.

7. *Deposuit:* "And he put down the mighty from their seat": and that was Satan with his devils, when he was in the kingdom of heaven, and he then for his pride, and his devils with him, were cast down to the bottom of hell,—"And the Lord exalts all the humble for ever."

7. He hath put down the mighty from their seat,

and he hath exalted the humble.

8. *Esurientes:* And then was Saint Mary saying, that "the Lord filled all in the beauty of the splendor of the heavens, those who let themselves hunger and thirst on earth for His sake. And all the men,—those who received wealth, and put their trust more in excess than in God, and so gave themselves up to idleness,—then

8. He hath filled the hungry with good things, Luke 1.53. (Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Matt. 5.6.) and the rich he hath sent empty away.

12. eadiȝe beoð ðearfena[a] gastes. 7 hie restað on heofonarice.

13. 7 eadiȝe beoð ða ðe ðissa eorð-welena ne[b] ȝymað[b].

14. 7 eadiȝe beoð ða ðe wepað nu for hiora synnum: forðon hie beoð eft ȝefrefrede on heofonarice.

15. ac uton we biddan ða femnan *Sanctam* Marian. *Þæt* heo us sie[c] milde þinȝere wið urne drihten hælendne Crist. *and*-weardes[d] rædes. 7 eces wuldres to ðæm us ȝefultmiȝe[e] ure Drihten. AMEN:—

12. Beati pauperes spiritu, quoniam ipsorum est regnum caelorum.

13. Beati mites, quoniam possidebunt terram.

14. Beati qui lugent, quoniam ipsi consolabuntur. *Matt.* 5.3–5.

---

[a]Glossed in margin *pauperes*. [b]Glossed *non curant*. [c]Glossed *sit*. [d]MS *7weardes*. A seven or eight letter word in margin erased; illegible in photostat. [e]So in MS; read with Bl *ȝefultumiȝe*.

Variant readings: 12. ȝastes] ȝastas heofona] heofena] 14. hiora] heora hie] hy ȝefrefrede] afrefrede 15. uton] utan femnan] fæmnan sie] sy 7weardes] ondweardes ȝefultmiȝe] ȝefultumiȝe.

---

prepared he for them eternal perdition.

9. *Suscepit Israel:* "And Israel receives all his servants, and was mindful of all his mercy," according as Matthew was saying, that the Lord went up at a certain time upon a mountain, with a great host of his holy ones, and he then set [*himself*] on the mountain,

9. He, remembering his mercy, hath received (sustained?) his servant Israel.
(Now Jesus seeing the multitude, went up into a mountain, and when he had seated himself,

10. *Sicut locutus est:* and then went his disciples unto him, and then opened the Savior his mouth, and was speaking to our fathers, and to Abraham, and was saying that his seed should grow throughout all the world.

10. there came to him his disciples and opening his mouth, *Matt.* 5.1–2), according as he had spoken to our fathers, remembering his mercy to Abraham, and to his seed forever. *Luke* 1.55. [*End of Magnificat.*]

11. And he taught his apostles and told them through what the soul should become most blessed, and he said thus:

11. (And he taught them, saying, *Matt.* 5.2.

Noteworthy in the Old English is the complete reversal of aspect evident in the first five verses of the *Magnificat.* In the Latin the verbs are all 3rd person, singular, and may be termed historical, in that they scan past action as they contemplate God's mercy to Mary at the Annunciation,—and this, of course, is the immediate impulse for this hymn. The remaining verses consider this particular instance of God's grace in the larger pattern of His favor to mankind, and especially to the seed of Abraham throughout the ages. Thus, in the first two verses the subjects are Mary's soul and spirit, who rejoice in God her salvation. In verses 3 and 4 the subject is God, who has regarded Mary's humility, and has done great things for her. The fifth is general, observing that God's mercy is on all those that fear Him. The sixth records the strength of His arm and His dispersal of the proud; the seventh, His deposition of the mighty and His exaltation of the humble; the eighth, His care for the hungry and His rejection of the wealthy. The ninth and tenth recognize His steadfast mercies to the seed of Abraham. God's grace to Mary is, on the one hand, in conformity with His dealings with His people in the past, and, on the other, it is the culmination of His grace to mankind.

---

12. "Blessed are the spirits of the poor, and they shall rest in the kingdom of heaven.

13. "And blessed are they who do not heed these things of earthly wealth.

14. "And blessed are they that weep now for their sins, for they shall in turn be comforted in the kingdom of heaven."

15. But let us pray the Virgin Saint Mary, that she be for us a merciful intercessor with our Lord Jesus Christ, for present help and for eternal glory, to which may our Lord help us. Amen.

12. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

13. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

14. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

The Old English, on the other hand, looks forward: it is concerned with the future and eternity. Two important grammatical changes are noticeable: the first five verses, those concerned with Mary, instead of being about God, are addressed directly to God, with the change of the verbs from the 3rd person singular to the 2nd; furthermore, instead of being in the indicative, and expressions of Mary's exaltation of God's grace to her, they are in the imperative, as commands, or emphatic petitions, that God magnify her soul, that He make her spirit rejoice in Him, that He behold her humility, and that He bring it to pass that she be known to future ages as the most blessed virgin. All this implies unawareness of the translator of the spirit of the canticle he is translating, and of the traditional great humility of Our Lady as she sang "magnificat with tune surpassinge sweete." He makes her appear as *dōm-ȝeorn* and as *tīr-hwæt* as any figure in heroic tradition, so that she cries out like a prima donna hungry for publicity, demanding that the Lord extol her soul and make sure that all generations call her blessed.

Is this an attempt to refurbish Our Lady in heroic wise, after the old epics, or is it only a reflection of the translator's difficulty in rendering refractory, and at times half-understood, matter into the vernacular? It cannot be that the original translator was incapable of recognizing in *magnificat* a present verb, in the 3rd person singular. In later verses he does indeed render his verb forms accurately: *fecit* and *dispersit,* 58.6; *deposuit,* 58.7; *implevit,* 58.5. *Exaltavit,* 58.7, he renders correctly as a 3rd person singular, though turning it into a present, *ūp-āhefð,* and probably intended it with future meaning. In 58.8, *dimisit* is almost unrecognizable in a plural. In 58.9, *suscepit* turns out as a present, but the whole verse is a problem all its own; *recordatus* and *locutus,* however, are both appropriately rendered to show past tense, and in all three the 3rd person singular is observed.

Three factors may have concurred to cause the reversal seen in these first verses in the Old English: (1) the form

of the verb *magnificat,* (2) the word order in the first verse, and (3) the fact that Mary speaks of herself in these first verses, using 1st personal pronouns: *anima mea,* 58.1, *spiritus meus* and *deo meo,* 58.2, *me,* 58.3, and *mihi,* 58.4; the passage is thus personal.

As to *magnificat,* it is quite possible that the translator interpreted the *-at* ending (appropriate for the 3d singular present active indicative for verbs of the *-āre* class) as expressing the subjunctive (as would be true in verbs of other classes). Involved in this is the problem of the subject and predicate of *magnificat:* (1) the Old English shows that *anima mea,* the true subject, but standing in the Latin immediately after the verb, has, perhaps under the influence of English word order, been mistaken by the translator as the object of *magnificat;* (2) *dominum,* the real object, but standing still further after the verb, has been taken to be the subject. The logic of position has triumphed over the logic of form. To express the subjunctive mood which he decided he saw in *magnificat,* the translator could use either an optative construction: *ȝemyclie mine sawle drihten,* "let the Lord magnify my soul," or an imperative: *ȝemycla mine sawle, drihten,* "magnify my soul, Lord"; and our Old English versions show the latter.

It is, of course, barely possible that this reversal of thought is to be credited, not to the original translator, but to some subsequent scribe. The translator, if he followed his Latin closely, would write *ȝemyclaþ min sawl drihten,* "magnifies my soul the Lord." A scribe coming upon this, and missing the purport of the matter, could take *drihten* rather than *sawl* as the subject of *ȝemyclaþ.* On such a short-range interpretation, he would rearrange, setting drihten *before* the verb, the nominal position of the subject, and in the interest of clarity he would add *min* to *drihten,* as appropriate for a nominative singular. He would then change *min sawl,* nom. sg., to *mine sawle,* acc. sg., to give the present syntax. The change of the

3rd sg. indicative, *ȝemyclaŏ* to the 2nd imperative *ȝemycla*, however, would still need explanation.

Against this plausible explanation is the fact that the four following verses of the *Magnificat* show the same reversal as that observed in the first verse. Significantly enough, it is the personal verses of this hymn, those in which Mary refers to herself in 1st personal pronouns, and the summarizing *et misericordia eius*, that show this transposition into the 2nd person singular, in direct address to God. It would be possible to explain the present state of the first verse on the basis of scribal misunderstanding of the Old English original, but hardly that of the whole series through *et misericordia eius*. For so extensive a change we must assume deliberate intent on the part of the translator himself. Once he had determined to his satisfaction that the opening verses of the *Magnificat* are to be rendered as addressed by Mary to God personally, and in the form of a demand rather than in humble recollection of His ways with His people, then all the grammatical concordances would reflect this decision, and all the changes of aspect seen in the Old English would inevitably follow. It is hardly likely that a half-understanding scribe would revise so thoroughly and so fundamentally this series as a whole.

The second notable feature of this Old English *Magnificat* is its amplification with matter from Matt. 5. This is accomplished rather clumsily, as may be seen in examining verses 9 and 10. It is possible to separate the two elements very easily; in fact, if the Beatitudes material be lifted out of its *Magnificat* setting, the latter will make sense and conform to the pattern of translation observed in the unexpanded verses. *Sicut locutus est* became the point for insertion of material from The Sermon on the Mount, probably because it afforded good concurrence with *et docebat eos dicens*, of Matt. 5.2. It will be noticed in verse 10 of the Old English that *sicut locutus est* stands quoted at the beginning of that verse, but that it is not translated until *accesserunt ad eum discipuli eius et*

aperiens os suum has been added from Matt. 5.1–2. And when finally translated, it results in the absurd situation that Christ on the Mount of the Sermon is made to open His mouth and speak to the patriarchs (*urum fæderum* "our fathers") and promise Abraham that his seed should cover the earth. Christ then turns immediately to teach His apostles by what means the soul should become most blessed, clinching this instruction by three verses from the Beatitudes. I believe that the tag *Sicut locutus est* is original and stems from the original translation of the *Magnificat.* A scribe would hardly go to the trouble of adding Latin tags; he would be more likely to leave them out. This may be illustrated from a sermon on the gospel for Palm Sunday: the Vercelli text shows the Latin tags, though woefully mangled; but the revised texts, MSS *Bodl. 340, CCCC 162,* and *CCCC 198,* are without them.[17] If the original translator of the *Magnificat* inserted the Latin tags, it is unlikely that he would quote *Sicut locutus est* and leave it untranslated for a line or so, while he brought in extraneous material before finally translating it. The inserted matter makes nonsense of the *Magnificat;* omitting it, we have sense.

It is possible, though by no means necessary, that the inflation of verses 7 and 8 also is the result of scribal editorship and improvement. Certainly these inflated verses stand in marked contrast to the six simple verses which precede them, and the three that follow.

Quite significant in view of the fondness of the Anglo-Saxon homilist for themes treating of the Other-world is a sort of universal direction given to the action of verses 7 and 8. In the Latin, it concerns the past, and is on earth, a generalization of God's way with man:

> 7. He hath put down the mighty from their seat;
> and He hath exalted the humble.
> 8. He hath filled the hungry with good things;
> and the rich He hath sent empty away.

[17]Max Förster, *Die Vercelli-Homilien* (*Bibliothek der Angel-Sächsischen Prosa,* XII), Hamburg: H. Grand, 1933, pp. 1–43.

In the Old English, these mighty who have been put down are identified as Satan and his angels, who, in the beginning, were cast out of heaven for their rebellion; the humble, whom the Lord exalted, are to be lifted up "to all eternity," *on ecnesse*. The verb which translates *exaltavit* is present, *up-ahefð*, and in connection with *on ecnesse* suggests a future tense: "He will lift up the humble forever." The hungry whom the Lord filled are identified as those who endure hunger and thirst for His sake. Their grace is to be spiritual, and will take place in the glory of the kingdom of heaven. Those who put their trust in riches rather than in God, and who gave themselves up to idleness, will find themselves dismissed into the eternal torment which He has prepared for them. Perhaps this interpretation, particularly of the hungry, with its recollection of Matt. 5.6, inspired the addition of the Beatitudes to the *Magnificat*. The insertion of the transitory *7 ða wæs Sancta Maria cweðende*, "and then was St. Mary saying," immediately after the Latin tag *Esurientes*, suggests, to me at least, that this is the work of the revising scribe, who has taken it upon himself to embellish his original as he copied it.

That a revising scribe has had a hand in shaping our Old English redaction of Transitus C, is revealed clearly by a reading in the first part of the Assumption story itself. The whole episode from which this reading is taken is so badly garbled in the Old English that it is next to impossible to make head or tail out of the story. It is clear from the Latin source, however, that John is speaking to his fellow apostles, explaining the significance of the extraordinary events that have already taken place in preparation for Mary's departure from this earthly life. He is reassuring their troubled minds by reminding them that at the Last Supper, when he lay on Jesus' bosom, the Savior enlightened him with regard to things to come. What was happening now was in accordance with God's providence:

> for indeed Our Lord and Master had told me beforehand on that night while I lay upon His bosom, when we were at supper.[18]

This is transmitted in the Old English thus:

> for þon þis cwæþ ure drihten 7 ura beboda lareow mid þy þe he wæs hlifiȝende ofer sæs brim, þa he wæs æt his æfen-ȝereordum.[19]

The Blickling reading taxed Morris's ingenuity, but he tackled it, englishing it thus:

> for of this spake our Lord and the teacher of our behests, when he was crossing the sea's flood, when he was at his evening meal.[20]

Hlifiȝende, however, does not properly mean "crossing"; that represents a desperate attempt on Morris's part to make some sort of sense out of what is arrant nonsense. *Hlifiȝende* means "rising up high, towering up." There is, as will be observed, no mention whatever of any sea in the Latin.

It is barely possible that the translator has misread *pectus* as *pontus.* This would give a word which could account for sea. I believe, however, that the key to the problem is the *lectio difficilior, brim.* It must be remembered that in insular script *s* and *r* are very much alike. The translator, if he rendered his Latin anywhere nearly correctly, must have written *bosm,* "bosom," in translation of *pectus;* the notion underlying *recumberem* would be satisfactorily represented in *hliniȝende,* "leaning." If, in some later copy, the word *bosm* stood as *bsm,* through accidental omission of the *o,* the reading would puzzle the

---

[18]The Latin runs: quoniam mihi ante dixerat dominus noster et magister illa nocte dum recumberem super pectus eius, dum cenaremus; Wilmart, *L'Ancien Récit de L'Assomption,* chapter 14, verse 10 (see above, note 6).

[19]Morris, *Blickling Homilies,* p. 143, lines 4–7.

[20]*Ibid.,* p. 142.

scribe. It would look very much like *brm*, and would suggest *brim*. The *brm*-reading would then be accounted for as the result of his predecessor's having written one short downstroke too few: three minims *(m)* instead of four *(im)*. *Brm* would then naturally be emended to read *brim*. *Sæs* could be added in amplification. But the resultant reading, "when he was reclining on the sea's flood, when he was at his evening meal," with its suspicion of *mal de mer*, would be intolerable under the circumstances, and would call for improvement. What could be easier than to change *hliniȝende*, "leaning," to *hlifiȝende*, "towering up"? Though not making much sense, this reading would at least obviate any undignified notion of seasickness.

This instance is not unique in Blickling Homily XIII, though it is one of the most spectacular. It does establish two facts: (1) that the Old English translation has suffered much in transmission, so as to become very difficult to read; and (2) that some scribe took it upon himself to improve this difficult text, often rendering confusion worse confounded.

To sum up with regard to our Old English *Magnificat:* it is my belief that the change in direction noticeable in the personal verses of that hymn is to be credited to the original translator, who misinterpreted as subjunctive the mood of *magnificat*, an indicative. This led to a change in certain verbs from perfect indicative to imperative. The passage was put in direct discourse, and instead of being spoken by Mary about the Lord, was addressed directly to him; hence, the verbs of which God would have been the subject have been altered from third to second person singular. I believe that it was the revising scribe who introduced the material from the Beatitudes. For this he was inspired by the association in his mind of "He hath filled the hungry with good things" from the *Magnificat* with the Beatitude, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." I believe also that the Other-world material to be found in verses 7 and 8 is due to the reviser.

COMMENT ON THE OLD ENGLISH TRANSLATION

58.2. "My salvation," *salutari meo,* comes out in the Old English as "thy salvation"; the causal clause, "because thou art the true God," *forðon þe ðu eart soð ȝod,* seems to be a general statement inspired perhaps by the otherwise untranslated *deo* of the Latin.

52.3. Again a perfect indicative is rendered as an imperative, as *respexit,* "he hath regarded," appears in the Old English as *sceawa,* "behold, look upon."

Mæȝenes, "of thy strength," must be a scribal error for *mæȝdenes,* "of thy handmaiden." It is curious that both Bl and CCCC 198 have the same reading; neither scribe shows signs of thinking about the meaning of what he was copying, or the error would have been recognized. The Worcester glossator, furthermore, took *mæȝenes* at its face value, for he glossed it *virtutem,* which renders correctly enough the Old English form extant, though it makes nonsense in this context. Thus we find two scribes and a glossator all three evidently unconscious of the error in this passage. This speaks well for their accuracy and fidelity, though not for their intelligence and independence. The passage is, of course, to be emended to read *mæȝdenes* with Morris.

Both Bl and CCCC 198 read *Sancte Marie,* which must stem from their common archetype. It is probably due to a short-range misinterpretation, whereby *Sancta Maria,* the postpositive subject of *cwæð,* was taken to be the indirect object of *cwæð.* Hence, the oblique case *Sancte Marie* instead of the nominative *Sancta Maria,* which the translator probably wrote originally.

58.5. As in the previous verse, the 3rd sg. is rendered as a 2nd sg. This is here all the more conspicuous as the Old English goes to the trouble of citing a Latin tag, *Et misericordia eius,* but translates *eius* as *ðin.* Significant is the fact that, apart from this, the Old English renders the Latin acceptably, though paraphrasing rather than translating exactly. It will be noticed, furthermore,

that 58.6 is likewise satisfactorily rendered into English, though amplified by the addition of "and who would not trust in him." These facts: the generally acceptable rendering of much of the Latin, the occasional observation of the 3rd singulars of the Latin verbs, particularly *fecit, he dyde,* and *dispersit, he todælde,* and the citation in the Old English of the tag *Et misericordia eius,* with the change of *eius* to *ðin,* as appropriate in direct address, all suggest that these changes are in the main to be credited to the original translator, who rearranged his matter in direct address and in livelier fashion.

58.6. *earan* is obviously an error for *earman.* It is curious that both CCCC 198 and Bl shows the same nonsense. The Worcester glossator interprets the passage aright, in that he glosses *earan* as *brachio,* though he does not correct the Old English itself.

7 noldon on hine ȝetrywan, "and would not trust in Him," has been added in amplification of the Latin, perhaps by the translator himself.

58.7. "He hath put down the mighty from their seat" is correctly rendered in the Old English, though a longish explanation is added identifying those deposed, not as men of this world, the obvious intention of the Latin, but rather as Satan and his angels, who, in the beginning, were expelled from Heaven. The pendant humble, whom, as the Latin has it, the Lord has exalted, are presumably of this world. It is noteworthy that *exaltavit* is translated in the present tense in the Old English, *up-ahefð,* which, in view of the modifying *on ecnesse,* "for ever," is probably to be taken as a future, "He will exalt."

Both Bl and CCCC 198 read *7 and his deoflum mid him,* "and with his devils with him," which is not grammatical; *deoflum* is to be emended with Morris to *deoflu.* The error is undoubtedly conditioned by the phrase *mid his deoflum* almost immediately preceding. As the scribe went to write the second *deoflu,* his eye caught the first: hence *deoflum* in this reading. This error, as it exists in both manuscripts, must have lain in their common archetype.

58.8. The simple matter of the *Magnificat* is again greatly expanded by blending, in general homiletic style, with a theme from the Beatitudes, suggested perhaps by the word *esurientes*. Again the scene of action is not this world, as in the Latin, but, in characteristic Old English fashion, the Other-world: "He hath filled the hungry with good things" becomes in actuality, "He will fill them in the splendor of heaven." Likewise, the rejection of the rich is not to be in this world, but in the world to come, as they are sent into the eternal perdition awaiting them. Again, instead of presenting the *Magnificat* in the first person, as was done in the first verses, the matter is now put into indirect discourse.

58.9. *Suscepit Israel puerum suum,* in which *deus* understood is the subject and *Israel* the object of *suscepit,* with *puerum suum* in apposition to *Israel,* is rearranged in Old English: *Israel* is taken as the subject of *suscepit (onfehð)* and *puerum suum,* standing in apposition to Israel, is made the object, so that the passage reads: "and Israel receives (*or* will receive) his servants." It is to be observed that the Latin itself is ambiguous, for *Israel* could be either nom. or acc.; *puerum,* however, is clearly accusative, as the Old English correctly renders it, though making a plural out of a singular. Was that a momentary confusion, seen frequently in beginners, of the Latin case ending with the Old English, and taking *-um* as a dative plural? *Recordatus* modifies, actually, not *Israel,* but *deus* understood, though the translator has taken it with the former, understandably enough. The notion of the reviser, to introduce the Beatitudes, has the effect of separating *sicut locutus* from *recordatus,* with which it belongs, since its antecedent is the subject of *locutus.*

ȝesette of CCCC 198 is not correct; either read *ȝesæt* with Bl, or add *hine,* to read *7 ða ȝestte he hine on ðæm munte,* "and then he seated himself on the mountain."

58.9–11. These two verses show alternate utilization of the last two clauses of the *Magnificat* and the opening lines of Matt. 5, as a passus from The Sermon on the Mount is

brought in almost by main force, apropos nothing at all, with the transitional, "as Matthew was saying." Verse 10 begins with the tag *Sicut locutus est,* which is not translated immediately, but is followed by more matter from Matt. 5; when it is finally translated, it is blended with *et docebat eos dicens* from Matt. 5.2. This does not seem like the work of the original translator. The first verses of the *Magnificat,* though with the change of direction pointed out above,[21] run concisely enough and directly; verses 7 to 11, however, are not straight but composite. As I have stated above, I believe that the present state is the result of improvement and inflation by the revising scribe. Certainly there is nonsense enough in the Old English *Transitus C,* but it all represents struggle with recalcitrant Latin originals. This, on the other hand, is gratuitous admixture of extraneous matter, and results in the absurdity of having Christ at the scene of The Sermon on the Mount talk to "our fathers and to Abraham," and promise them that Abraham's seed should spread throughout the world. After that, He turns to admonish His disciples, and begins The Sermon on the Mount.

58.12. *pauperes spiritu* could be rendered nicely as *ðearfan ȝastes,* 'poor of spirit,' which well may have been the original reading, though both Bl and CCCC 198 with *ðarfena ȝastas* (*ȝastes* CCCC 198) give a reading different from what we expect from the Latin. The *ðearfena* construction, common to both, must stem from their archetype. *ȝastes* of CCCC 198 is to be explained as a transition form, showing the reduction of unstressed vowels to an ə-sound.

58.13. This represents a problem: *mites* is not recognizable in the Old English. The negative suggests that the translator took *quoniam,* probably in abbreviation, as signifying *qui non;* hence, *ȝymað* does not properly translate *possidebunt,* but must represent some difficult struggle with a half-comprehended Latin original. Certainly, "Blessed are they that do not heed these things of earthly

[21]See p. 16.

wealth," is quite different from "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

58.14. This seems to have come out rather well in the Old English, though showing amplification: those who mourn, do so now, and for their sins; their comfort will be later, not in this world, but in the kingdom of heaven. This change is in accordance with the elaborations pointed out in verses 7 and 8, and explicit in the *Pauperes spiritu* Beatitude.

58.15. This is an appropriate concluding prayer, befitting the Assumption story and the *Magnificat,* and in accordance with the usual manner of terminating homiletic texts.

A NOTE ON THE WYCLYFITE BIBLE TRANSLATION

By Ernest William Talbert

The accepted theory concerning the Wyclyfite Bible translation is that Wyclyf instigated, but did not do the actual translation of, the so-called Early Version, completed *ca.* 1384, and that Purvey was the editor and main translator of the so-called Late Version, completed *ca.* 1395.[1] The Early Version is translated almost literally from the Latin; Purvey, however, in making the Late Version attempted to translate the Bible not only correctly but also idiomatically. In making his version, he adhered to the following principles, which he enumerates in the "General Prologue":[2]

1. The ablative absolute may be translated as a verb with a particle prefixed.
2. Present and past participles may be translated as verbs with a particle prefixed.
3. A relative may be translated as its antecedent plus a preceding copulative conjunction.
4. A word, although appearing only once in the Latin, may be, nevertheless, repeated as often as necessary.
5. *Autem* or *vero* may be rendered as *forsoothe, but,* or even as *and.*
6. When Latin word order makes a literal translation impossible, the relative and the antecedent may be interchanged and the order of English idiom used.
7. Such equivocal words as *ex, enim,* and *secundum,* although always difficult to translate, need not and should not be consistently translated.

In her *Lollard Bible,* the outstanding work on the Wyclyfite Bible translation, Miss Deanesly states that the Late Version is closely dependent upon the Early Version, with the

[1]Margaret Deanesly, *The Lollard Bible* (Cambridge: Univ. Press, 1920), pp. 238–240, 252–267.

[2]*The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, with the Apocryphal Books, in the earliest English version made from the Latin vulgate by John Wycliffe and his followers,* ed. J. Forshall and F. Madden (Oxford: Univ. Press, 1850), I, 57–60.

exception of MSS *Bodl. 277* and *C.C.C.Cbg. 147*.[3] These manuscripts, as Forshall and Madden previously pointed out,[4] apparently represent imperfect attempts to revise still further the version edited by Purvey.

In this note I wish to point out two facts. First, that there is a well-defined New Testament version of the Lollard Bible which was apparently developed between 1384 and 1395. Forshall and Madden called attention to this version in describing MS *New College 67*,[5] but I have been unable to find it mentioned elsewhere. Second, that this "intermediate" version is also found in the Huntington Museum manuscript *HM 134*. Forshall and Madden were apparently unaware of this manuscript's existence; Seymour de Ricci describes it is "Wycliffe's translation, Purvey's version."[6]

I shall discuss the second matter first. The original readings of *HM 134* are few; none are of great importance,[7] and save for the text of Matthew, de Ricci's description is essentially correct, for elsewhere *HM 134* agrees closely with the Late Version of the Wyclyfite Bible translation. Beginning with Matthew IV, 20, however, and extending to Matthew XIII, 33,[8] the manuscript contains a group of readings which Forshall and Madden printed from other manuscripts as variants of the Early

---

[3]Deanesly, *op. cit.*, p. 252.

[4]*Op. cit.*, I, xxxi.

[5]*Ibid.*, I, xvi–xvii, xxxvi.

[6]Seymour de Ricci with the assistance of W. J. Wilson, *Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada* (N. Y.: H. W. Wilson, 1935), I, 56. Two errors in pagination have caused de Ricci to give the length as 162 fols. instead of 160. Since, with the exception of the first and the last two pages, only every tenth page was numbered in pencil, fol. 19 was incorrectly numbered 20 and fol. 38, numbered 40. I am indebted to Dr. Max Farrand, Director of Research at the Huntington Library, for permission to collate and publish the readings of *HM 134*.

[7]Variations in spelling, mistakes of lipography (two words at the most), and such changes in word order as a scribe, familiar with his exemplar, might make in transcribing the New Testament.

[8]Fol. 3v, col. a, l. 11 to fol. 11r, col. a, l. 3.

Version. Those readings are evidently the result of an attempt to make the translation more idiomatic, and they agree with what I here call the "intermediate" version.[9] From Matthew IV, 20, to Matthew XIII, 33, *HM*

[9]Inasmuch as I here anticipate a later discussion, see below, p. 35, I give the following parallel passages to illustrate the readings found in MSS containing what I have called the "intermediate" version. It is impossible, however, to find a short passage which will illustrate fully the characteristic readings of those MSS. For example, in the first specimen given below, Purvey's principles for the translation of participles are carried out fairly well. This is not always true: at times Purvey's fourth principle is most noticeable, and in some passages the choice of words will agree in general with the Late Version. Consequently, the following passages have been chosen at random; the reader will have a much better idea of the nature of this "intermediate" version if he will read the footnotes to Forshall and Madden's edition which are indicated in note 10.

Matt., VIII, 1–4:

E. V.	I. V.	L. V.
Forsothe when Jhesus hadde comen doun fro the hil, many cumpanyes folewiden hym. And loo! a leprouse man cummynge worshipide hym, sayinge, Lord, ȝif thou wolt, thou maist make me clene. And Jhesus, holdynge forthe the hond, touchide hym, sayinge, I wole, be thou maad clene. And anoon the lepre of hym was clensid. And Jhesus saith to hym, See, say thou to no man; but go, shewe thee to prestis, and offre that ȝifte that Moyses comaundide, in to witnessing to hem.	Forsothe when Jhesus hadde comen doun fro the hil, many cumpanyes suden hym. And loo! a leprouse man cummynge worshipide hym, and seide, Lord, ȝif thou wolt, thou maist make me clene. And Jhesus, holdynge forthe the hond, touchide hym, and seide, I wole, be thou maad clene. And anoon the lepre of hym was clensid . And Jhesus seide to hym, See, say thou to no man; but go, shewe thee to prestis, and offre the ȝifte which Moyses comaundide, in to witnessing to hem.	But whanne Jhesus was come doun fro the hil, mych puple suede hym. And loo! a leprouse man cam, and worschipide hym, and seide, Lord, if thou wolt, thou maist make me clene. And Jhesus helde forth the hoond, and touchide hym, and seide, Y wole, be thou maad cleene. And anoon the lepre of him was clensid. And Jhesus seide to hym, Se, seie thou to no man; but go, shewe thee to the prestis, and offre the ȝift that Moyses comaundide, in witnessyng to hem.

Matt., XIII, 10–16

E. V.	I. V.	L. V.
And disciplis cummynge to seiden to hym, Whi spekist thou in parablis to hem? The whiche answerynge seith to hem, For	And the disciplis neiȝynge seiden to hym, Whi spekist thou in parablis to hem? Whiche answerynge seide to hem, For	And the disciplis camen nyȝ, and seiden to him, Whi spekist thou in parablis to hem? And he answeride, and seide to

134 has some 518 variations from the Late Version which agree with the intermediate version.[10] On the other hand,

---

to ȝou it is ȝouen for to knowe the mysterie, *or priuyte,* of the kyngdam of heuenes; but it is nat ȝouen to hem. For it shal be ȝouen to hym that hath, and he shal have plentee; trewly who that hath nat, that thing that he is seen to haue shal be taken awey fro hym. Therfore I speke to hem in parablis, for thei seeynge see nat, and thei heerynge heeren nat, nether vndirstonden; that the prophecie of Ysay seiynge be fulfillid in hem, With heerynge ȝe shulen heere, and ȝee shulen nat vnderstande; and ȝee seeynge shulen see, and ȝee shulen nat see; for the herte of this peple is enfattid, and thei herden greuously with eris, and thei han closid her eeȝen, that sum tyme thei see with eeȝen, and with eris heeren, and vndirstonden in herte, and thei ben to gidre turned, and I heele hem.

to ȝou it is ȝouen to knowe the misteries of the kyngdam of heuenes; but it is nat ȝouen to hem. For it shal be ȝouen to hym that hath, and he shal have plentee; trewly if a man haue nat, also that thing that he semeth to haue shal be taken awey fro hym. Therfore I speke to hem in parablis, for thei seeynge see nat, and thei heerynge heeren nat, nether vndirstonden; that the prophecie of Ysay be filled in hem, that seith, With heerynge ȝe shulen heere, and ȝee shulen nat vnderstande; and ȝee seeynge shulen see, and ȝee shulen nat see; for the herte of this peple is gretly made fatt, and thei herden greuously with eris, and thei han closid her eeȝen, lest sum tyme thei see with eeȝen, and with eris heeren, and vndirstonden in herte, and thei ben conuerted, and I heele hem.

hem, For to ȝou it is ȝouun to knowe the priuytees of the kyngdom of heuenes; but it is not ȝouun to hem. For it shal be ȝouun to hym that hath, and he shal haue plente; but if a man hath not, also that thing that he hath shal be takun awei fro him. Therfor Y speke to hem in parablis, for thei seynge seen not, and thei herynge heren not, nether vndurstonden; that the prophesie of Ysaie seiynge be fulfillid in hem, With heryng ȝe schulen here, and ȝe shulen not vndurstonde; and ȝe seynge schulen se, and ȝe shulen not se; for the herte of this puple is greetli fattid, and thei herden heuyli with eeris, and thei han closed her iȝen, lest sumtime thei seen with iȝen, and with eeris heeren, and vndirstonden in herte, and thei be conuertid, and Y heele hem.

[10]Because most of these variations are the result of making the translation more idiomatic, it is, perhaps, incorrect to number separately each variation of one or two words; consequently, I give the letters of the footnotes where the readings agreeing with *HM 134* may be found. I list after the footnote letters the MSS having that particular reading of *HM 134;* Forshall and Madden, IV, 9ff.: *p* (OQUV *sec.m.*), *r* (UV *sec.m.—HM 134* omits 'makynge agein either'), *u* (V; OU), *w* (OUV *sec.m.*), *z* (OU *sec.m.* V *sec.m.*), *b* (NOUV *sec.m*), *c, d, f,* (OUV *sec.m.*), *k* (AGMNOPUV *sec.m.* XY), *o* (AGMNOPQ SUVXY), *u* (UV *sec.m. sup. ras.*), *v, a,* (OUV *sec.m. sup. ras.*), *m* (OUV), *o* (OU two words precede 'glade' in *HM 134*), *oo* (OUV *sec.m.*), *p* (V *sec.m.*), *q* (X), *t, v, x,* (OUV *sec.m.*), *y* (OUX), *a, b, c,* (OUV *sec.m.*), *d* (UV*sec.m.*), *k* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *l, m, n, r* (OUV

in this section of the gospel of Matthew, there are only 45 instances in which *HM 134* lacks variant readings which occur in more than one of the manuscripts containing extended portions of the intermediate version. These 45

---

sec.m.), *s* (N), *t* (TUV *sec.m.*), *u* (UV *sec.m.*), *y* (OUV *sec.m.*), *e* (UVX), *g*, *h* (OUV *sec.m.*), *i* (OU), *l* (OUV *sec.m.*—*HM 134* transposes 'þere' and 'biþenkist'), *m* (OUV *sec.m.*), *o* (OUV), *p* (OQUV *sec.m.*), *q* (OUV *sec.m.*), *r*, *s* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *u* (OUV *sec.m. X*—*HM 134* transposes 'now haþ'), *w* (A *sec.m.* OUV *sec.m.*), *z* (MNOPUVW), *c* (OUV *sec.m.*), *e* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *f*, *g*, *h* (OUV *sec.m.*), *i* (AGMNOPQSUVWXY), *q* (AMPQUVW), *t*, *u* (UV), *v*, *w* (OUV *sec.m.*), *a* (OU), *b* (NUV *sec.m.*), *c*, *d*, *e*, *f*, *g* (OUV *sec.m.*), *h* (OU), *m*, *r*, *t*, *u* (OUV *sec.m.*), *v* (OQUV *sec.m.* X), *x* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *c* (OUX), *d*, *e* (OUV *sec.m.*), *f* (O), *g* (OU), *k*, *l* (UV *sec.m.*), *m* (OUV *sec.m.*), *o* (V *sec.m.*; OU—*HM 134* has 'bifore þe' after 'trumpe'), *p*, *q* (OUV *sec.m.*), *r* (AGMNOPQSUV *sec.m.* WXY), *t*, *u* (OUV *sec.m.*), *v* (MOUV *sec.m.*), *w*, *b* (OUV *sec.m.*), *e* (UV *sec.m.*), *h* (G *sec.m.* MNOQSUVX), *l* (OUX), *r* (OUV *sec.m.*), *w* (OUX), *x* (MOUV *sec.m.* X), *y* (OU), *a* (U *sec.m.* V *sec.m.*), *b* (OUV *sec.m.*), *c* (UV *sec.m.*), *e* (OUV *sec.m.*), *g* (OU), *h* (NV), *l* (O), *m* (OUV *sec.m.*), *o* (ONQV), *p* (OX), *q*, *t* (OUV *sec.m.*), *v* (OUV), *a*, *e*, *f* (OUV *sec.m.*), *g* (OU), *i* (UV *pr.m.*), *k*, *l* (OU), *p* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *r* (U), *t* (AGMNOPSUVWXY), *u* (U), *v* (OU), *w* (OUV *sec.m.*), *x* (OU), *y* (OUV *sec.m.*), *d* (AGMNOQSUVWXY), *e* (OU), *f* (OUX), *h* (OU), *n* (OSUV *sec.m.* X), *p*, *s* (OUV *sec.m.*), *u*, *z* (OU), *a* (U), *b* (OQV; NSW), *c* (OU), *e* (AOQ; NVW), *f* (U), *k*, *l* (OU), *m* (OQU), *q* (OUV *sec.m.*), *r* (A *sec.m.* OUV *sec.m.*), *t*, *u* (*HM* omits gloss), *v*, *y* (OUV *sec.m.*), *b* (OU), *d* (GNOPQSUV), *e*, *f* (OUV *sec.m.*), *g* (OV *sec.m.*), *h* (OUV), *l* (OUV *sec.m.*), *m* (A *sec.m.* OUV *sec.m.*), *n* (UV *sec.m.*), *o* (OUV), *p* (OUV *sec.m.*), *t* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *v* (UV *sec.m.*), *x* (X; OUV *sec.m.*), *b* (OUV *sec.m.*), *d* (A *sec.m.* OUV *sec.m.*), *e* (UV *sec.m.*), *f*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *o*, *p* (OUV *sec.m.*), *q* (UV *sec.m.*), *r* (OUV *sec.m.*), *s* (UV *sec.m.*), *t* (OUV *sec.m.*), *u* (OU), *v* (OUV *sec.m.*), *w* (OQUW *pr.m.* y), *x*, *a* (OUV *sec.m.*), *e* (OU), *f* (AVWX), *l* (OUV *sec.m.*), *o* (UV *sec.m.*), *p* (U), *q* (OUV *sec.m.*), *t*, *w* (OU), *x*, *a*, *b*, *g* (OUV *sec.m.*), *h* (U), *i* (OUV *sec.m.*), *k* (NOSX), *m* (OU), *n*, *p*, *q* (OUV *sec.m.*), *r* (GMNOPQSUVWXY), *t*, *v*, *w* (OUV *sec.m.*), *y* (OSUV *sec.m.*), *a*, *b* (OUV *sec.m.*), *d* (UV *sec.m.*), *f* (OUV *sec.m.*), *g* (OU), *h* (OUV *sec.m.*), *i* (UV *sec.m.*), *q* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *r* (OUVX), *t*, *u*, *v*, *y*, *z*, *a*, *d*, *f* (OUV *sec.m.*), *g* (OU), *i*, *l* (OUV *sec.m.*), *n* (AGMNOPQSUVWXY), *o* (OV *sec.m.*; NW), *q* (AGNOPSUY), *r* (AGNPQSUV *sec.m.* XY), *t* (OUV *sec.m.*), *u* (OU), *v* (OUV *sec.m.*), *x* (OU), *z*, *a* (OUV *sec.m.*), *b* (OU), *c* (O), *e*, *f* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *g*, *h* (OV *sec.m.*), *k*, *o* (OUV *sec.m.*), *p* (GOUV *sec.m.* XY), *q*, *r* (OUV *sec.m.*), *s*, *t* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *u* (OUV *sec.m.*),

readings, moreover, do not involve such problems of idiomatic translation as Purvey enumerates in the "General Prologue"; whereas most of the 518 variants which *HM 134* does contain are clearly the result of attempting to use an

---

w (GOUXY), *x, y, c, h, k* (OUV *sec.m.*), *n* (U *sec.m.*), *o* (AMNOSUW), *p, q* (OUV *sec.m.*), *u* (AGMNOPQUV *sec.m.* WXY), *v* (U *sec.m.*), *w, x* (OUV *sec.m.*), *z* (OU), *a* (OUV *sec.m.*), *b* (U), *c* (OV *sec.m.*), *f, g, h, i* (OUV *sec.m.*), *k* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *l* (OUV *sec.m.*), *n* (GMPQSUVWXY), *o* (OUV *sec.m.*), *p, q* (UV *sec.m.*), *u* (AGM NOSUVWXY), *w, z, c* (OU), *d* (O), *e, g, h* (OU), *k* (GOPQSUVWX), *n* (AMNOPQSUVW), *p* (AGMNOSUVWXY), *q* (OU), *s* (OUW), *t, u* (OU), *v* (NOVW), *w, z, a* (OU), *d* (GOUX), *e* (OU), *g* (OUX), *i* (OUS), *l, m* (OU), *n* (AMNOUVW), *p* (OU), *q* (OSU), *r* (AGN OPQSUVWXY), *u, v, x* (OU), *z* (OQUX), *a, b* (OU), *c* (NOU), *d, e, f* (OU), *g* (G *pr.m.* OPUWX), *l, m* (OU), *n* (OUWXY), *o* (A *sec.m.* MOUVW *sec.m.*), *s, u, v, x* (OU), *a* (OUX), *c, d* (OUV *sec.m.*), *e* (NOUV *sec.m.*), *f* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *h, i, k* (OUV *sec.m.*), *l* (OU), *p* (OUV *sec.m.*), *q* (PQUVWX), *r* (NOUV *sec.m.* X), *t* (UV *sec.m.*), *y* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *z* (OUV *sec.m.*), *b* (OPQUV *sec.m.* X), *g* (OUV *sec.m.*), *k* (*HM 134* omits also 'soule, that is'), *m* (OUV *sec.m.*), *n* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *o* (OUV), *rr* (AGOUV *sec.m.*), *s* (OSUV *sec.m.* X), *t* (PUVW), *u* (ANOQUVW), *w, y* (OUV *sec.m.*), *a* (UV *sec.m.*), *c* (AGMNOPQSUVWXY), *d* (UV *sec.m.*), *g* (OU), *k* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *p* (NOU), *v* (OUV), *x, y, z, a* (OUV *sec.m.*), *b* (OU), *c* (GOU), *f* (AG *sec.m.* MNOSUV *sec.m.* W), *g* (OUV *sec.m.*), *i* (V *sec.m.*), *k* (OSUV), *m* (OUV *sec.m.*), *p* (OU), *r, u* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *v* (OUV), *w* (NOUV), *xx* (AMNOUV *sec.m.*), *b* (OV), *c* (OUV *sec.m.*—*HM 134* has transposition of preceding prep. phrase), *f* (OUV *sec.m.*), *g* (AG MNOUVX), *i, l, n* (OUV *sec.m.*), *o* (OU), *p* (OUV *sec.m.*), (OPUV *sec.m.*), *r* (OUV *sec.m.*), *u, v* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *y* (AGMNOPQSU VWXY), *z, a, c* (OUV *sec.m.*), *e* (OU), *f* (NOUV *sec.m.*), *i* (OUV *sec.m.*), *k* (OV *sec.m.* W), *m* (OX), *n* (OUV *sec.m.*), *o* (OSUV *sec.m.* X), *p* (AG *sec.m.* OSUV), *q, r* (OUV *sec.m.*), *v.* (OQ *sec.m.* UV *sec.m.* W *sec.m.*), *x, y, z* (OUV *sec.m.*), *a* (OUV *sec.m.* W), *b, c* (OUV *sec.m.*), *cc* (OV *sec.m.*), *e* (OUV *sec.m.*), *f* (O), *g* (OUV *sec. m.*), *h* (OPQSWX), *i* (OVW), *k* (UV *sec.m.*), *m* (OU), *n* (OV *sec.m.* U *pr.m.*), *q* (GUW *sec.m.*), *r, s, t, u* (OUV *sec.m.*), *v* (OUV *sec.m.* W *sec.m.*), *x, z, b* (OUV *sec.m.*), *c* (OUV *sec.m.* W *pr.m.*), *e* (AK *pr.m.* MNOQSVW), *g, i* (OUV *sec.m.*), *l, n* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *o* (UV *sec.m.*), *r* (OUV *sec.m.*), *s, u* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *y* (OUV *sec.m.* W *sup.ras.*), *z* (OUV), *g* (OUV *sec.m.*), *h* (V), *k* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *o* (OUV *sec.m.*), *p* (W), *q* (OUV *sec.m.*), *r* (UV *sec.m.*), *s* (OUVW *sec.m.*), *t* (OQ UVW *sec.m.*), *v* (V *sec.m.* X), *w* (OV *sec.m.*), *a* (O), *c* (UVW *sec.m.*), *e* (OUV), *g* (OV *sec.m.*), *h* (OUV *sec.m.*), *k* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *n* (OUV *sec.m.*), *q* (UV *sec.m.*), *r* (OUVW *sec.m.*), *s* (UV *sec.m.*), *t* (OUVW

English idiom. Obviously, then, this manuscript contains a curious example of eclectic fusion and should be considered along with the other manuscripts having a Lollard Bible version that is neither the 1384 nor the 1395 translation.

Forshall and Madden, in collating the Wyclyfite Bible manuscripts for their edition of the translation, found that the Early Version Old Testament manuscripts were "remarkably uniform in the readings of the text"[11] and that the copies of the Late Version likewise presented "so great an uniformity, that their peculiarities scarcely admit of an observation."[12] In collating MS *New College 67,* however, they found readings which varied greatly from those of the Early Version and the Late Version. The first twelve chapters of this manuscript (*V*), which contains only the books of the New Testament, originally agreed pretty closely with Forshall and Madden's text of the Early Version; but a second hand changed some of the readings of those chapters so that the text would be more idiomatic. Between Matthew XIII and Luke XIX, *V* has readings peculiar to itself and MS *Addl. 11,858* (*U*), although a few of those readings were inserted by correctors. After the gospels, *V* differs greatly from the Early Version, and its readings, furthermore, are not those of the Late Version.[13] Forshall and Madden consequently

---

sec.m.), *v* (OUV *sec.m.* W *sec.m.* X), *w* (OUV), *z* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *b* (OUX), *c* (OUV *sec.m.* W *pr.m.*), *e* (OUX), *i* (OUV *pr.m.*), *l, m, n* (OUV *sec.m.*), *p* (UV *sec.m.* X), *r* (OU), *s* (OUX), *t* (OUV *sec. m.*), *v* (OUVW *sec.m.*), *w* (OU *pr.m.* V), *y, z, a, b* (OUV *sec.m.*), *d* (OQ *sec.m.* UV), *e, l, o, q, r* (OUV *sec.m.*), *s* (O; UV), *t, w, a, b* (OUV *sec.m.*), *d* (U *sec.m.*), *m* (OUV *sec.m.*), *n* (OUVW *sec.m.*), *s* (UV), *v* (OU), *w* (GMOPSUVWY), *x* (AOSUV *sec.m.* X), *y, b, c* (OUV *sec.m.*), *cc* (AOQSUV *sec.m.* X), *d, f* (OUV *sec.m.*), *g* (UV), *h* (OS UV *sec.m.* X), *i, k, l* (OUV *sec.m.*), *n, o* (OUV), *r* (OUV *sec.m.*), *t* (OUV *sec.m.* X), *u* (X), *v* (OUV *sec.m.*), *w* (AOSUV *sec.m.* X), *x* (X), *y* (MOU), *z* (OUV *sec.m.*), *a* (UV *sec.m.*), *b, d* (OUV *sec.m.*), *e* (PUV), *f* (OUV), *g* (OU), *h* (UV *sec.m.*), *k* (OU).

[11] *Ibid.*, I, xviii.

[12] *Ibid.*, I, xxxi.

[13] *Ibid.*, I, xvi–xvii, xxxvi, lii.

suggested that *V* might be ". . . a revision of the earlier text made by the second translator previously to the adoption of the principles by which he was finally guided in preparing his version."[14] The suggestion is a good one; for it is supported by what we know of Purvey's literary activities between the years 1384 and 1390. During those years, according to Miss Deanesly's excellent study, he was probably making glosses on the gospels;[15] consequently, if the suggestion of Forshall and Madden is correct, it is not surprising to find that *V* has long marginal glosses, some of which have not been discovered elsewhere and the greater part of which are found only in *V* and MS *Harl. 5017*.[16] Nor was Purvey alone in his desire to produce a more satisfactory Bible version. He speaks of the "manie gode felawis and kunnynge" who worked at "the correcting of the translacion,"[17] and the anonymous continuator of Knighton's chronicle has left us a record, under the year 1392, of one William Smith of Leicester, who from 1384 to 1392 had been writing in the mother tongue books of the gospels and epistles.[18] Other manuscripts containing this intermediate version are *British Museum Addl. 11,858* (*U*— in Mark, Luke, and part of Matthew),[19] *Magd. Coll. Cbg. L. 5. 19.* (*O*— throughout Matthew),[20] and *Bodl. Douce 369*, 2nd part (*K*— in Luke and John).[21] MS *Sidney Coll. Cbg.*△. *5. 14.* (*N*) has, at

---

[14]*Ibid.*, I, xvi.

[15]*Op. cit.*, pp. 275–277.

[16]Forshall and Madden, I, xvi.

[17]*Ibid.*, I, 57.

[18]*Chronicon Henricii Knighton, vel Cnitthon, monachi Leycestrensis*, ed. J. R. Lumby (Rolls Series, no. 92), II, 313. The passage deals with Smith's recantation: "Libros etiam solemnes quos in materna lingua de evangelio, et de epistolis et aliis episcopis [epistolis, MS *A*] et doctoribus conscripserat, et ut fatebatur per annos octo studiose conscribere laboraverat archiepiscopo coactus tradidit."

[19]Forshall and Madden, I, xvi–xvii, xxxvi.

[20]*Idem.*

[21]*Idem.*

times, readings which agree with those in *O, U, V,* and *HM 134*,[22] as do MSS *Banister* (*S*) and *Christ Church E. 4.* (*X*).[23] MS *Phillipps 9302* (*W*), a copy of the gospels and epistles of St. Paul, has alterations in a second hand which generally agree with the readings in *O, U, V,* and *HM 134*.[24]

Although there is a large number of original readings common to all of the above manuscripts, they have been buried in the footnotes of the only complete edition of the Wyclyfite Bible. That those readings constitute what is in effect a definite version is shown, I believe, by (1) the remarkable uniformity of the manuscripts which do not contain the *V* readings,[25] (2) the fact that the readings found in the above manuscripts conform with English idiom better than do those of the Early Version, (3) the fact that the Late Version, which was made under the editorship of Purvey, is even more idiomatic than is the text of the above manuscripts, (4) the presence of the *V* readings in at least nine manuscripts, (5) the glosses in *V,* which are in accordance with what we know of Purvey's literary activity during the years between the completion of the Early Version and 1390, and (6) the testimony of Purvey and the evidence provided by the Leicester chronicler which show that the less-famous Wyclyfites were working with Biblical material during the years 1384 to 1395. Granted that the New Testament intermediate version was only a tentative attempt to produce a satisfactory English Bible, yet it has survived, in different portions of varying length, in at least five manuscripts; and it has contaminated at least another four.[26] It testifies to the zeal of Wyclyf's followers during the trying years after his death and after Courtenay's accession

---

[22]*Idem.*

[23]*Ibid.*, I, xvi, xxxvi.

[24]*Ibid.*, I, lxiv.

[25]I.e., with the exception of MSS *Bodl. 277* and *C.C.C.Cbg. 147;* see *supra,* pp. 29–30, 35.

[26]Eighty-one manuscripts of the New Testament (or of considerable portions of the New Testament) listed by Forshall and Madden have not been collated.

to the archbishopric; and it is an excellent instance of the way in which the Lollards, in their enthusiasm for spreading the word of God, must have continually corrected Bible copies during those years and used the best exemplars available. Indeed, one might wish to revise, at least so far as the New Testament is concerned, Miss Deanesly's statement that the Late Version is closely dependent upon the Early. The intermediate version undoubtedly shows that the Lollards, under the leadership of Purvey, almost immediately began to revise the Early Version and to formulate a number of principles for idiomatic translation from the Latin. In all probability, the Late Version was based not upon the Early Version but, in part at least, upon this intermediate one, whose idiomatic revisions indicated what principles might be followed in preparing the 1395 Bible.

ASPECTS OF PRIMITIVISM IN SHAKESPEARE AND SPENSER

BY THOMAS P. HARRISON, JR.

Primitivism is a broad term often used of various expressions of human malcontent with the present manifesting itself in a longing for earlier, simpler, better conditions of life.[1] Like most intellectual currents of the Renaissance, this tendency, which derived largely from classical thought, remained vague and undefined. Often inspired by notions of life as it was first lived on the earth or by reports of the survival of primitive happiness in some remote land, primitivistic idealism proposed to forego the commodities of civilization in both public and private life. This philosophy of escape was reinforced by association with the traditions of the Golden Age, the earthly paradise, and the pastoral Arcadia, set forth variously and profusely in Renaissance literature. Furthermore, a more serious contemplation of the relation of humanity to the lower forms, as in Spenser, led to the belief in the essential goodness and morality of nature, which were believed purer than those nourished by civilization. This conviction, modified as it was by his perception of the sinister side, inclined Spenser to dwell upon those scenes in which man and nature are regarded as under one law; it kindled his sympathy for the gentle savage, who seems to represent the earlier transition from beast to man, and for beasts themselves governed by kindly instincts.[2]

---

[1]For comprehensive definition and classification of primitivism, see *A Documentary History of Primitivism and Related Ideas*, vol. I, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity*, edited by Arthur O. Lovejoy and associates, The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1935. Backgrounds of Renaissance primitivism are briefly considered by Louis I. Bredvold, "The Naturalism of John Donne in Relation to Some Renaissance Traditions," *J.E.G.P.*, XXII (1923), 471–502.

[2]This subject is treated by Denis Saurat, *Literature and the Occult Tradition*, tr. Dorothy Bolton, London, 1930: "Spenser's Philosophical Ideas," pp. 163–237.

The foregoing ideas, it will be recognized, are based essentially upon the attitude towards the past which presupposes a degeneration of humanity from its first state. Their embodiment in literature is often accompanied by the decay-of-nature idea, which does not concern the present inquiry. Important, however, is the fact that parallel with this sentimental, soft ideal of the first happy condition persisted another conception in pointed contradiction. More favorable to the uses of civilization, this account presents realistically the original grimness of life in face of the hostile forces of nature. The difficulties of procuring food and of gaining protection from wild beasts made survival difficult and resulted in sturdy qualities for the human race which only the softening influences of a gradual civilization caused to degenerate.[3] Yet ultimately this austere conception is congruous with ideas of evolution and of progress; it is anti-primitivistic in that it realistically opposes a reversion to earlier stages in humanity's upward course.

The purpose of this study is not to seek the ultimate origins in classical philosophy of the primitivistic ideas encountered in either Shakespeare or Spenser, but merely to identify these and to compare them. Such a study may or may not point to indebtedness on the part of Shakespeare; it does, however, more positively illustrate the appearance of ideas which reach far back into classical thought, and it furthers accordingly an understanding of Renaissance expression. Questions of source being subordinate, the distinctions between Shakespeare and Spenser as artists in different media are enhanced as both are seen to be concerned with identical phenomena.

Still, the question of indebtedness should hardly be dismissed. Shakespeare's frequent resort to Spenser's

---

[3]Whereas Ovid popularized the delectable associations with the Golden Age (cf. Lovejoy, *op. cit.*, pp. 43 ff.), Lucretius exemplifies the opposing tradition (*ibid.*, pp. 222 ff.): the earth was in her prime, yet for primitive man, living in savagery, survival was a grim affair. Seneca (*ibid.*, pp. 263 ff.) combines both traditions.

Faerie Queene is universally recognized,[4] and there are special reasons for admitting the evidence in the present study. In the first place, expressions of primitivism are almost confined to the so-called romances—*The Winter's Tale, The Tempest,* and *Cymbeline.* Some emphasis is to be found also in *As You Like It* and *Timon of Athens,* but as a group it is the romances especially which include passages and characters with definite primitivistic interest. For the most part, the plots of these plays derive from prose romance, and with this genre they share two qualities which designate and distinguish them from the rest of Shakespeare's work: their involved plot-structure reflects the characteristic concentric method of story-telling in prose romance;[5] and occasionally they depend upon symbolic suggestion approaching allegory, also common to their romance originals. Even *Lear* and *Timon* betray this conscious or unconscious reliance upon symbolic suggestion, which has been compared by Professor Bradley with Spenser's method in the *Faerie Queene.*[6] Moreover, the general kinship between Spenser's epic romance and the plays to be examined makes more interesting the specific evidence that Spenser shared with Montaigne in stimulating Shakespeare's interest in primitivism.

The conclusions of this study may be briefly stated. The famous pastoral scene in *The Winter's Tale* seems to have been written with Spenser's earthly paradise on the Isle of Idleness in view; and the discussion of art and nature in that play anticipates the principal motif in *The Tempest.* In a different form and with accretions the earthly paradise from Montaigne which appears in *The Tempest* is brought into sharp contrast with the realism of Caliban, who in turn is a complete antithesis of Spenser's

---

[4]Two important studies are those by Edwin Greenlaw, "Shakespeare's Pastorals," *S.P.,* XIII (1916), 122–154; and by Alwin Thaler, "Shakespeare and Spenser," *S.A.B.,* X (1935), 192–211.

[5]This similarity is noted by E. M. W. Tillyard, *Shakespeare's Last Plays,* London, 1938, pp. 71–72.

[6]A. C. Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy,* London, 1904, pp. 264–265.

noble savage. The idea of the importance of gentle birth and discipline, found in Spenser, is illustrated in *Cymbeline,* which is congruous with the thought of the *Tempest,* on the one hand, and *As You Like It,* on the other. Finally, *Timon of Athens,* like *Lear,* presents as tragedy the enveloping motif of *As You Like It,* in its picture of the reversion of humanity to the brute plane which drives Timon mistakenly to seek a return to savagery. In larger outline the play produces a characteristic and consistent judgment upon the primitivistic ideal.[7] These conclusions are submitted more as themes for further study in their various relationships than as absolute pronouncements, for obviously the subject of primitivism in Renaissance literature merits complete investigation.

I. The Winter's Tale

The Winter's Tale is akin to *As You Like It* in that both present variants of the type story originating in the Greek *Daphnis and Chloe,* from which sprang such romances as Lodge's *Rosalynde,* Greene's *Pandosto,* Sidney's *Arcadia,* and Spenser's Calidore-Pastorella interlude in the *Faerie Queene,* Book six. These relationships have been amply demonstrated by Professor Greenlaw, who establishes Shakespeare's interest in Spenser and Sidney in this connection.[8] In contrast with *The Winter's Tale,* however, *As You Like It* is a pastoral play in that the poet adopts the conventions and holds them up for critical inspection. As regards the affiliations of the idyllic Florizel-Perdita episode, the only actual pastoral setting in *The Winter's Tale,* opinion has been divided. Greenlaw

[7]The usually accepted chronology of the plays as stated by Professor Kittredge is as follows: *As You Like It,* 1599, *Timon of Athens,* 1605–1608, *Cymbeline,* 1610, *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest,* 1611. The Kittredge complete works (New York, 1939) is followed in the subsequent quotations.

[8]Cf. Greenlaw, *op. cit.,* 145. Professor E. M. W. Tillyard, *op. cit.,* pp. 12–13, notes significant analogies between the manner of Shakespeare and of Sidney.

recognizes the Spenserian tone of Shakespeare's delightful scene and illogically protests the opinion of Greg to the effect that these shepherd scenes "owe nothing of their treatment to pastoral tradition."[9] Obviously, there is a broad distinction between pastoral, however charming, in the sense of belonging to the country, bucolic, and the literary tradition of the pastoral with which Florizel and Perdita are only indirectly connected through Spenser.

Yet neither Greenlaw nor Greg is aware of the dominant spirit of this scene. In her analysis of Shakespeare's imagery, Miss Spurgeon finds that the prevailing note in *The Winter's Tale* "seems to be the common flow of life through all things, in nature and man alike . . . the oneness of rhythm, of law of movement, in the human body and in the human emotions with the great fundamental rhythmical movement of nature itself."[10] The passage which best illustrates this identification of humanity and nature and which suggests comparison with Spenser occurs in the well-known scene in which Perdita bestows flowers upon her guests. The seriousness of the dialogue here distinguishes it at once from the light-hearted banter in *As You Like It.* Perdita has been directed to preside over the sheep-shearing feast; and as she appears in her festive robe with arms laden, Florizel proclaims her (*W.T.*, 4.4.2–3),

> no shepherdess, but Flora
> Peering in April's front.

As if mocking the unreality of the eternal spring of the conventional earthly paradise, Shakespeare's Perdita remembers the season to which each flower belongs as she presents flowers appropriate to each group of her guests (103–132):

---

[9]Cf. Greenlaw, *op. cit.*, 145–146. "Shakespeare has transformed a romance of adventure which patronizes the 'homely pastimes' of shepherds . . . into the most exquisite and satisfying pastoral in Elizabethan literature."

[10]Caroline F. E. Spurgeon, *Shakespeare's Imagery*, New York, 1935, p. 305.

Here's flow'rs for you:
Hot lavender, mints, savory, marjoram;
The marigold, that goes to bed wi' th' sun
And with him rises weeping. These are flow'rs
Of middle summer, and I think they are given
To men of middle age. Y'are very welcome . . .
(To Florizel) Now, my fair'st friend,
I would I had some flow'rs o' th' spring that might
Become your time of day; *(to the Girls)* and yours, and yours,
That wear upon your virgin branches yet
Your maidenheads growing. O Proserpina,
For the flowers now that, frighted, thou let'st fall
From Dis's wagon! daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares and take
The winds of March with beauty; violets—dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes
Or Cytherea's breath; pale primeroses,
That die unmarried ere they can behold
Bright Phoebus in his strength (a malady
Most incident to maids); bold oxlips and
The crown imperial; lilies of all kinds,
The flow'r-de-luce being one! O, these I lack
To make you garlands of; and my sweet friend,
To strew him o'er and o'er.
Flo. What, like a corse?
Per. No, like a bank for love to lie and play on;
Not like a corse; or if—not to be buried,
But quick, and in mine arms.

Dr. Tillyard terms this scene "an earthly paradise painted in the form of an English countryside." "Perdita," he continues, is "at once a symbol and a human being. She is the play's main symbol of the powers of creation. . . . There is little direct reference to her instincts to create; but they are implied by her sympathy with nature's lavishness is producing flowers, followed by her own simple and unashamed confession of wholesome sensuality." Tillyard notes that "Apollo is the dominant god in *The Winter's Tale,* and his appearance in Perdita's speech is meant to quicken the reader to apprehend some unusual significance. He appears as the bridegroom, whom the pale primroses never know, but who visits the other flowers.

Not to take the fertility symbolism as intended would be a perverse act of caution."[11]

Simply as a poetic convention Perdita's flower list is comparable even in detail with that in the April Eclogue of the *Shepherdes Calender*. Moreover, the emphasis in Shakespeare upon marriage, upon the symbolism of sun and earth (or Phoebus-Adonis and Venus),[12] these recall Spenser's Garden of Adonis without, of course, suggesting a Spenserian source for this universal symbolism. But, in expressing symbolically the philosophical notion, or "philosophical feeling," as Saurat terms it in Spenser, of man's identity with plants, Shakespeare and Spenser are at one in representing a well-defined phase of primitivism.[13]

Of Spenser's earthly paradises, one conspicuously illustrates the idea which has been described; namely, Phaedria's Island of Idleness. As Guyon visits this island, a typical paradise in its eternal spring and luxuriant growth, he is invited to accept the law governing this idle loveliness and to share this life. The song of Phaedria, mistress of the isle, touches the heart of this invitation (*F.Q.*, 2.6.15–16):

> Behold, O man, that toilesome paines doest take,
> The flowrs, the fields, and all that pleasant growes,
> How they them selves doe thine ensample make,
> Whiles nothing envious Nature them forth throwes
> Out of her fruitfull lap; how no man knowes,

---

[11]*Op. cit.*, pp. 43, 46.

[12]This symbolism pervades Timon's famous address to earth, *T.A.* 4.3.177 ff., quoted below, pp. 67, 68. Cf. also *A. and C.*, 5.2.20–21:

> Downy windows, close!
> And golden Phoebus never be beheld
> Of eyes again so royal.

[13]The basis of all of Shakespeare's imagery, this analogy is especially recognizable in the Sonnets, *e.g.*, 15:

> When I perceive that men as plants increase,
> Cheered and check'd even by the self-same sky, . . .

Cf. *W.T.*, 4.4.454–457.

They spring, they bud, they blossome fresh and faire,
And decke the world with their rich pompous showes;
Yet no man for them taketh paines or care,
Yet no man to them can his carefull paines compare.

The lilly, lady of the flowring field,
The flowre deluce, her lovely paramoure,[14]
Bid thee to them thy fruitlesse labors yielde,
And soone leave off this toylsome weary stoure:
Loe, loe, how brave she decks her bounteous boure,
With silkin curtens and gold coverletts
Therein to shroud her sumptuous belamoure!
Yet nether spinnes nor cardes, ne cares nor fretts,
But to her mother Nature all her care she letts.

like the lilly
That once was mistress of the field and florish'd,
I'll hang my head, and perish.

Cf. Perdita,

lilies of all kinds
The flow'r-de-luce being one.

In Spenser's April eclogue, 141–144, lilies "match with the fayre flowre *delice*." E. K. notes: "*Flowre delice*, that which they misterme *Flowre de Luce*, being in Latin called *Flos delitiarum*."

It is beside the point that Spenser condemns idleness, his moral theme being temperance. Saurat has noted the distinction that the poet's "condemnation applies to the delights and not to Nature herself" and that he is "sensible of the charm he expresses so harmoniously."[15] Like Shakespeare, Spenser conveys the suggestion of Phaedria's identity with nature's lavish wealth; and thus he so mitigates the theme of vicious excess that Phaedria at once symbolizes both feminine charm and nature's fertility.[16]

---

[14]Jortin compares *H. VIII*, 3.1.150–152:

[15]*Op. cit.*, p. 168.

[16]Cf. *F. Q.*, 2.6.25:

And she, more sweete then any bird on bough,
Would oftentimes emongst them beare a part,
And strive to passe (as she could well enough)
Their native musicke by her skilful art.

This suggests Lucretius' account of primitive music, *D.R.N.*, 5.1379–1381: "The imitation of the liquid notes of birds with the mouth began long before men could delight their ears by singing smooth carols together."—tr. Lovejoy, *op. cit.*, p. 231.

Shakespeare, on the other side, disregards the pastoral banalities of Greene as he gives full scope to the idyllic pastoral paradise. Both poets adopt the symbolic method which is directed to the same end. For the rest, Spenser's purpose is to further the morality of Guyon's quest; Shakespeare's scene retains its touch with reality in its truth to human emotion as to the English countryside. *The Winter's Tale* thus fully shares the paradise tradition to which Shakespeare gives consummate and uncritical expression. In the other plays, it will be seen, the poet rejected its false appeal; to such expressions as he may have found in Spenser he elsewhere gave ironical recognition.

A final aspect of the scene in Shakespeare just considered serves to enhance the symbolic undercurrent while seeming to draw an important distinction between the works of man and of nature. Perdita's scorn of gillyflowers, "which some call nature's bastards," precipitates the argument with Polixenes upon the timeworn antithesis of nature and art[17] (*W.T.*, 4.4.83–103):

> Of that kind
> Our rustic garden's barren, and I care not
> To get slips of them.
> *Pol.* Wherefore, gentle maiden,
> Do you neglect them?
> *Per.* For I have heard it said
> There is an art which in their piedness shares
> With great creating nature.
> *Pol.* Say there be.
> Yet nature is made better by no mean
> But nature makes that mean. So, over that art
> Which you say adds to nature, is an art
> That nature makes. You see, sweet maid, we marry
> A gentler scion to the wildest stock
> And make conceive a bark of baser kind
> By bud of nobler race. This is an art
> Which does mend nature—change it rather; but
> The art itself is nature.

[17]For its appearance in Democritus and Plato cf. Lovejoy, *ibid.*, pp. 167 and 207.

Per. So it is.
Pol. Then make your garden rich in gillyvors,
And do not call them bastards.
Per. I'll not put
The dibble in earth to set one slip of them;
No more than, were I painted, I would wish
This youth should say 'twere well, and only therefore
Desire to breed by me.

Ironically, a few moments later it is Polixenes himself who stormly protests the marriage of his son, a gentle scion, to the supposed wild stock, Perdita. This inconsistency would seem to weaken sympathy with the argument of Polixenes, whose lines are usually regarded as Shakespeare's answer to Montaigne's specious distinction between nature and art. Only Professor Knowlton, it seems, grants Perdita a due share in the argument, though he later confesses that Polixenes' side, "deeper and more basic than hers, . . . appears to be that of Shakespeare."[18] That is to say, man is a part of nature and therefore his art *is* nature. It is plain, however, that the poet yet recognizes the frequent falsity of human effort to imitate nature; Perdita's vigorous comparison with the painted face concurs with Viola's conditioned praise of Olivia in *Twelfth Night* (1.5.255), "Excellently done, if God did all."

Professor Knowlton has also designated those passages in Spenser where nature and art are mentioned together.[19] More often than Shakespeare, Spenser lapses into convention. Phaedria, in imitating bird notes, surpasses them (*F.Q.*, 2.6.25); so art overcomes nature. Another instance, which suggests Polixenes, appears in the description of the Temple of Venus (*F.Q.*, 4.10.21):

For all that Nature by her mother wit
Could frame in earth, and forme of substance base,
Was there, and all that Nature did omit,
Art, playing second Nature's part, supplyed it.

---

[18]E. C. Knowlton, "Nature and Shakespeare," *PMLA*, LI (1936), 732.

[19]"Spenser and Nature," *J.E.G.P.*, XXXIV (1935), 368, n. 7.

So, according to Polixenes, the human art of breeding plant-hybrids "mends" nature.[20] The two poets, then, agree essentially upon this ancient antithesis. This aspect of primitivism is definitely pertinent to later considerations in which nature as heredity and art as man's discipline or nurture reappears with remarkable consistency in the work of both Shakespeare[21] and Spenser.

II. The Tempest

The Winter's Tale, it has been seen, fully illustrates the legitimate uses of the earthly paradise, with or without Spenserian echoes. Ironic contrast with the eternal spring of the paradise tradition is even here perceptible as Perdita meticulously assigns to each flower its due season. This suggestion becomes more interesting as one turns to *The Tempest.*

Over against the primitive figure of Caliban, half man, half beast, the only native upon the island ruled by Prospero, Shakespeare provides certain parenthetical contrasts which set forth the unreality of the earthly paradise: its abundance, its eternal summer, and its soft idleness. The manner of these contrasts recalls *As You Like It,* where Shakespeare throws in relief the gross realism of Corin, Audrey, and William against the vacuous pastoral figures, Silvius and Phoebe.

The first illustration concerns the famous description of the ideal commonwealth. As the aged Gonzalo surveys this untouched isle upon which he and his less philosophical companions have been cast, he tries to comfort them by describing the imagined possibilities here. "Had I plantation of this isle," he muses (*Tempest,* 2.1.147–168):

---

[20]Cf. Cleopatra's involved comparison, *A. and C.,* 5.2.95–100. With both poets, Knowlton concludes ("Nature and Shakespeare," 730), Nature "is a standard or ideal which art follows and by which it is measured."

[21]The continuity of this idea in Shakespeare has been pointed out by J. M. Murry, *Shakespeare,* New York, 1936, pp. 334 ff.

I' the commonwealth I would by contraries
Execute all things; for no kind of traffic
Would I admit; no name of magistrate;
Letters should not be known; riches, poverty,
And use of service, none; contract, succession,
Bourn, bound of land, tilth, vineyard, none:
No use of metal, corn, or wine, or oil:
No occupation; all men idle, all;
And women too, but innocent and pure;
No sovereignty . . . .
All things in common nature should produce
Without sweat or endeavour. Treason, felony,
Sword, pike, knife, gun, or need of any engine
Would I not have; but nature should bring forth,
Of its own kind, all foison, all abundance,
To feed my innocent people . . . .
I would with such perfection govern, sir,
T' excel the golden age.

It has long been known that most of this passage is a close paraphrase of Montaigne. There is, however, some disagreement as to Shakespeare's meaning, his attitude towards this proposal.[22] In contrast to Professor Knowl-

[22]By itself the passage appears to be an idle dream vaguely related to other motives in the play. Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch (*Shakespeare's Workmanship*, New York, 1917, p. 292) describes it as "a sketch—thrown out, as it were, in passing—exquisite in a few lines, as genial as it is wise, humorous and yet wistfully attuned to the moral of the whole play, 'We are such stuff as dreams are made on'—a sketch, . . ." Stuart P. Sherman ("Shakespeare, Our Contemporary," in *On Contemporary Literature*, New York, 1917, pp. 296–297) is perhaps nearer the truth in terming Gonzalo "one bland believer in 'natural goodness,' who would establish Montaigne's ideal commonwealth in the isle, and abolish labor and government, expecting, as a result of following nature, leisure in the men and purity in the women. Is it not the Socratic insight of Shakespeare that cuts in with the laconic comment: 'All idle; whores and knaves'?" Incidentally, Professor George C. Taylor (*Shakespeare's Debt to Montaigne*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1925, pp. 35–36) corrects the error of interpreting Montaigne's reports of the South American government as his own ideal. Still, Shakespeare would hardly be aware of this distinction.

ton's position,[23] Murry connects the earlier lines of Polixenes denying the art-nature antithesis with the present passage as a reiterated protest on Shakespeare's part against a return to the primitive, and he suggests the intended contrast between Gonzalo's (Montaigne's) naïve ideal, on the one hand, and the actual primitive, Caliban, on the other.[24] Yet the extent of Shakespeare's irony in this play has not been fully noticed, nor has it been examined in relation to the other plays and to the thought of Spenser.

In the first place, not all of the passage derives from Montaigne. Upon the long list of "contraries" drawn from the account of South American cannibals are superimposed the positive attributes of the earthly paradise, the sentimental view of a kindly nature. The initial suggestion of a beneficent earth Shakespeare derived from the French essay, the context and emphasis of which he altered to enhance the unreality of this adaptation.[25] Venerable and gracious Gonzalo mistakenly supposes that conditions on the isle coincide with his prepossessions concerning nature's lavish abundance. By a series of touches Shakespeare further accentuates the hollowness of this ideal.

Idleness finds its opposite in toil, and, by reiterating the necessity of toil on the island, the poet implicitly contradicts Gonzalo's notions. The repeated and unifying motif of Caliban's chore of carrying wood, noted by Professor

---

[23]"Nature and Shakespeare," 743: "It suffices to intimate that Shakespeare and Montaigne held much the same doctrine of nature, and that their views conform to what was current in their time."

[24]*Op. cit.*, p. 336.

[25]Referring to the peaceful inclinations of these savages, Montaigne furnishes some hints for Shakespeare's passage (Florio, Tudor Translations, pp. 226–227): "They contend, not for the gaining of new lands; for to this day they yet enjoy that naturall ubertie and fruitfulnesse, which without labouring toyle, doth in such plenteous abundance furnish them with all necessary things, that they need not enlarge their limits."

Stoll,[26] embodies this further motif. To Miranda's instinctive aversion for Caliban Prospero rejoins (*Tempest,* 1.2.310–313) :

> But as 'tis
> We cannot miss him. He does make our fire,
> Fetch in our wood, and serves in offices
> That profit us.

Only in wistful dreams does Caliban realize the paradise ideal (*Tempest,* 3.2.149–151) :

> in dreaming
> The clouds methought would open and show riches
> Ready to drop on me, that, when I wak'd,
> I cried to dream again.

These two passages point the contrast between the gospels of work and of idleness.

Commentary upon Gonzalo's illusion of the gentleness and innocence of primitive man is further perceptible in the vision Prospero calls forth for Gonzalo and his companions. "Several strange shapes," announces the text, "bring in a banquet; and dance about it with gentle actions of salutations; and inviting the King &c. to eat, they depart." Because their manner tallies with Gonzalo's conceptions, immediately he takes these spirits to be natives (*Tempest,* 3.3.27–34) :

> If in Naples
> I should report this now, would they believe me?
> If I should say, I saw such islanders
> (For certes these are people of the island)
> Who, though they are of monstrous shape, yet, note
> Their manners are more gentle, kind, than of
> Our human generation you shall find
> Many—nay, almost any.

Then suddenly, amid thunder and lightning, banquet and islanders vanish. Murry has remarked upon Gonzalo's

---

[26]Elmer E. Stoll, "The Tempest," *P.M.L.A.,* XLVII (1932), 699–726; cf. especially 712.

mistake,[27] but he does not observe the superior judgment of even a Trinculo, who rightly names Caliban "an islander" amid the similar circumstances of thunder and lightning. This parallel completes the ironic effect so far as Gonzalo is concerned.

The illusion of the earthly paradise receives a final designation in the masque provided by Prospero for Ferdinand and Miranda. Quiller-Couch notes Shakespeare's apparent distaste for the masque, which with the later plays was becoming fashionable; the poverty of his own masques betokens the poet's lack of interest in this type to which he pays "ironical homage." The anger of Prospero, Quiller-Couch suggests, "is not wholly unconnected with scorn of a performance which to the fine spirit Ariel he had already described as 'another trick.' "[28] The song itself in the masque, Tillyard more favorably links with both Miranda and Perdita as symbols of fertility: "Like the goddesses in Perdita's speech about the flowers, Juno and Ceres and the song they sing may be taken to reinforce the fertility symbolism embodied in Miranda."[29]

That the poet of the masque is not in sympathy with his theme is as evident as that this theme is not unconnected with Perdita in her floral paradise. Further, one may recognize in the masque's unreality a direct reflection of Gonzalo's illusions. Brief reference to the song seems to confirm these points (*Tempest*, 4.1.106–117):

Juno. Honour, riches, marriage blessing
Long continuance, and increasing,
Hourly joys be still upon you!
Juno sings her blessings on you.
Ceres. Earth's increase, *foison* plenty,
Barns and garners never empty,
Vines with clust'ring bunches growing,
Plants with goodly burthen bowing;
Spring come to you at the farthest
In the very end of harvest!
Scarcity and want shall shun you,
Ceres' blessing so is on you.

[27] *Op. cit.*, p. 336.
[28] *Op. cit.*, pp. 211–212.
[29] *Op. cit.*, p. 57.

The blessing of Ceres is a fulfillment of Gonzalo's ideal as of Caliban's vision. Unlike Gonzalo, Ferdinand inquires the nature of these singers. Aware that these are Prospero's spirits, he exclaims (*Tempest,* 4.1.122–124):

> Let me live ever here!
> So rare a wond'red father and a wise
> Makes this place Paradise.

Gonzalo's illusion of "all *foison,* all abundance" excels the Golden Age. Ceres' song additionally reflects the paradise tradition in the eternal spring which returns "in the very end of harvest."[80]

Shakespeare's unsympathetic attitude towards such a conventional picture is made more explicit by the sudden interruption of the masque which vanishes before the astonished couple. "I had forgot," mutters Prospero (*Tempest,* 4.1.139–141):

> I had forgot that foul conspiracy
> Of the beast Caliban and his confederates.

Thus as Ferdinand is lapsed in a mistaken dream of Paradise now come true upon this isle, Prospero, who knows the isle, brings the whole group back to real earth.

Nothing in this series of impressions, now complete, conveys the idea that Shakespeare "answers" Montaigne or Spenser; no more does *As You Like It* satirize any specific pastoral. These are realistic reactions to a conventional idea which the poet had met in Montaigne and Spenser as is other contemporaries.

In each of the foregoing passages Caliban has been used directly or indirectly as the means of securing an explicit ironical effect. This complex figure requires further consideration as a plausible basis for deducing Shakespeare's primitivistic thought. For present purposes it will be

---

[80]The *Variorum Tempest* cites the analogue, noted by Staunton, in the Garden of Adonis passage, *F.Q.,* 3.6.42:

> There is continuall spring, and harvest there
> Continuall, both meeting at one tyme.

desirable first to introduce a Spenserian conception of the savage which, like the sentimental tradition already noted, appears by contrast in Shakespeare's Caliban.

The Faerie Queene is liberally supplied with savages both good and bad. Spenser's romantic naturalism, his veneration of Venus Pandemos, is congenial with the ancient tradition which extolled the animal as superior to man.[31] By their kindly disposition his savages and beasts denote their kinship with the fruitful earth. But at other moments Spenser shows that he has no illusions. One of his savages, son of a forest-witch (*F.Q.*, 3.7.6–19), has been fully compared with Caliban.[32] More representative perhaps of the poet's conception of primitive man, and hence more significant here, is the unnamed savage who saves Calepine and Serena from an enemy and ministers variously to their needs (*F.Q.*, 6.4).[33] Ovid and Lucretius may well have originated the details of Spenser's figure, who is drawn with fair completeness before his final disappearance. He first appears as defender of the noble Calepine. Creeping forward after the rescue, he expresses compassion[34] for the wounded knight and his lady (*F.Q.*, 6.4.11) thus:

---

[31]Cf. Lovejoy's discussion of this, which he terms "animalitarianism" (*op. cit.*, pp. 19–22). Professor Roscoe E. Parker ("Let Gryll be Gryll," *P.Q.*, XVI (1937), 218–219) notes Spenser's acquaintance, possibly through Calvin, with Plutarch's *Gryllus*, an important influence during the sixteenth century (Lovejoy, p. 411).

[32]Cf. Thaler, *op. cit.*, 203–204.

[33]Saurat, *op. cit.*, pp. 169–172, regards this savage and Sir Satyrane (*F.Q.*, 1.6) as expressing Spenser's conception of the transition from beast to man.

[34]Lucretius names inarticulate pity as a trait in the early primitive (*D.R.N.*, 5.1022–1023): "signifying stammeringly by speech and gesture that it is right for all to have pity on the weak" (tr. Lovejoy, p. 229). Shakespeare's Ariel pities Prospero's enemies, thus prompting his master to pardon. Childlike in all other respects, Caliban is devoid of pity.

> Kissing his hands, and crouching to the ground,
> For other language had he none, nor speach,
> But a soft murmur, and confused sound
> Of senselesse words, which Nature did him teach,
> T' expresse his passions, which his reason did empeach.

Fetching "a certaine herbe," he staunches the knight's wound;[35] and later he invites his guests to his woodland abode (*F.Q.*, 6.4.14):

> To whom faire semblance, as he could, he shewed
> By signes, by lookes, and all his other gests.

Serena, parting from him in the following canto, renders high compliment (*F.Q.*, 6.5.29):

> In such a salvage wight, of brutish kynd
> Amongst wilde beastes in desert forrests bred,
> It is most strange and wonderfull to fynd
> So milde humanity and perfect gentle mynd.

It is natural to assume that Shakespeare was familiar with Spenser's noble savage; *As You Like It, Cymbeline,* and *The Winter's Tale* have long been associated with the Calidore-Pastorella episode and others from this same book.[36] If he did indeed recall Spenser's figure, there are several points relevant to the present inquiry. The hospitality, the gentleness, the pantomime, these may contribute

---

[35]The earliest primitive in Lucretius is ignorant of the care of wounds (*D.R.N.*, 5.998), "ignoros quid volnera vellent." Montaigne declares the absence of all disabilities among the cannibals (Florio, Tudor Translations, p. 223): "either shaking with the palsie, toothlesse, with eies dropping, or crooked and stooping through age." Trinculo (*Tempest*, 2.2) identifies the prone, trembling Caliban as "an islander, that hath lately suffered by a thunderbolt." The drunken Stephano diagnoses the case as an ague and by his bottle succeeds in restoring Caliban. With the last disability mentioned by Montaigne cf. Prospero's observation about Caliban (4.1.191–192):

> And as with age his body uglier grows,
> So his mind cankers.

[36]Cf. Greenlaw, *op. cit.*, 131, 145. The *Variorum Spenser, Books Six and Seven,* Baltimore, 1938, p. 203, links the bear episode in *The Winter's Tale,* 3.3, with the bear of the present canto, 17–23.

to the ironic effect of the scene in which Prospero summons out of thin air the gentle savages who invite the king and his company to the banquet. Serena's wonderment at her inarticulate servant, quoted above, is comparable with the remark of Alonso (*Tempest,* 3.3.36–39):

> I cannot too much muse
> Such shapes, such gesture, and such sound, expressing
> (Although they want the use of tongue) a kind
> Of excellent dumb discourse.

As Spenser's savage exemplifies the soft primitivism consistent with the tradition of the earthly paradise, so in part, it may be said, Caliban represents Shakespeare's protest against this sentimental retrospect. Imagined notions about primitive speech Shakespeare travesties in Prospero's discouraged reproach of Caliban (*Tempest,* 1.2.351–358):

> Abhorred slave,
> Which any print of goodness wilt not take,
> Being capable of all ill! I pitied thee,
> Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour
> One thing or other. When thou didst not, savage,
> Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like
> A thing most brutish, I endow'd thy purposes
> With words that make them known.

To which Caliban retorts (363–364):

> You taught me language, and my profit on't
> Is, I know how to curse.[37]

Caliban is Prospero's failure because he is incapable of responding to "any print of goodness." His master thus confesses his failure (*Tempest* 4.1.188–190):

> A Devil, a born devil, on whose nature
> Nurture can never stick! on whom my pains,
> Humanely taken, all, all lost, quite lost!

---

[37]"The very words that import lying, falsehood, treason . . . envy, detraction, and pardon, were never heard of amongst them"—Florio's Montaigne, Tudor Translations, p. 222.

The vital importance of this resistance to nurture, man's art, in relation to nature is rightly emphasized by Murry, who in *The Tempest* sees a concrete embodiment of Polixenes' argument in *The Winter's Tale:* "The Island is a realm where by Art or Nurture Prospero transforms man's Nature to true Human Nature."[38] The dominant rôle of Caliban in this regard is proved by the astonishing manner in which, as Professor Gilbert has shown,[39] the various phases of his character are paralleled or contrasted with the other persons of the play. Caliban faces towards Miranda, Ferdinand, Alonso, and the peerless Stephano and Trinculo. Response to nurture being his theme, Shakespeare affirms that gentility of birth is requisite to the task of working out the beast in human nature. This point is variously brought out as the central theme with its various contributing motives.

The villainous plot of Sebastian and Antonio, significantly, testifies that gentility often breeds bestial natures. Although superior to Trinculo and Stephano, the savage Caliban is hopeless because he is a "demi-devil";[40] Alonso and Sebastian are yet "worse than devils" in their ignoble departure from the aristocratic plane of conduct. Ferdinand, forced to labor at Caliban's very task, wins Prospero's approval (*Tempest,* 4.1.7),

> Thou hast strangely stood the test.

Caliban, on the contrary, is devoid of true ambition, for professing to want freedom, he promises to serve King Stephano even more abjectly than he had served Prospero. "Miranda's noble character," states Professor Gilbert,[41] "has made the training that Caliban has turned to evil redound to her good, and she has gained from it profit

---

[38]*Op. cit.,* p. 333.

[39]Allen H. Gilbert, "The Tempest: Parallelism in Characters and Situations," *J.E.G.P.,* XIV (1915), 63–74.

[40]This important point is observed by Professor Knowlton, "Nature and Shakespeare," 743.

[41]*Op. cit.,* 74.

impossible to princesses who have more leisure for the vanities of the world. Her innocence and goodness are Shakespeare's recognition of the truth in Montaigne's protest against the vices of civilization." It should be remembered, however, that, like Ferdinand, she owes her response to Prospero's training not to the imagined beauty of her primitive environment, but to her nativity; hers is a native, not a natural goodness. Furthermore, the poet apparently holds no brief for life on the isle; at the end all gladly leave it to Caliban, who alone seems to delight in it.[42] Moreover, at the beginning of the play a distinction is made between Caliban's mode of life and that of Prospero and Miranda. Prospero's "cell" is unlike the bare rock to which Caliban is condemned after his attempt upon the virtue of Miranda. There he lives like a beast; though not naked, he subsists upon the natural products of the isle: nuts, such birds as he can catch, and other island delicacies. But the two noble exiles had by Gonzalo been secretly provided according to their station (*Tempest,* 1.2.163–164):

> Rich garments, linens, stuffs, and necessaries
> Which since have steaded much.

From these considerations two notable facts emerge. In the first place, Caliban's ignoble origin underlies the impossibility of his regeneration; and in the second, his manner of life exemplifies primitive survival amid natural laws which are harsh and inimical. The qualities manifest in Caliban as a primitive type are hence congruous with his nature on the sides both of heredity and of environment.

Thus regarded, Caliban is eloquent testimony of the paradox of the noble savage. Of this incongruity Spenser seems aware as he endows his savage with noble birth,[43]

---

[42]This observation is made by Stoll, *op. cit.*, 721.

[43]Spenser's other noble savage, Sir Satyrane (*F.Q.*, 1.6), became lord of all beasts because he was born of a mortal woman and a satyr; his immortal sire bequeathed a masterful, crude heroism.

an addition which makes the more pointed the possible satiric irony of Shakespeare. Spenser's explicit purposes are stated in his own comments upon Serena's gentle defender (*F.Q.*, 6.5.1–2):

> O what an easie thing is to descry
> The gentle blood, how ever it be wrapt
> In sad misfortunes foule deformity, . . .
> For howsoever it may grow mis-shapt,
> Like this wyld man, being undisciplynd,
> That to all vertue it may seem unapt,
> Yet will it shew some sparkes of gentle mynd,
> And at the last breake forth in his owne proper kynd.
>
> That plainely may in this wyld man be red,
> Who, though he were still in this desert wood,
> Mongst salvage beasts, both rudely borne and bred,
> Ne ever saw faire guize, ne learned good,
> Yet shewd some token of his gentle blood
> By gentle usage of that wretched dame.
> For certes he was borne of noble blood,
> However by hard hap he hether came;
> As ye may know, when time shall be to tell.

Essentially, it appears, this figure is drawn after such an account as Ovid's, even to the abstinence from eating flesh.[44] This gentle tradition Spenser alters to coincide with the purposes of the book and the aristocratic tradition of his time.[45] Despite the addition of nobility, however, Spenser's figure remains the savage. Over against

---

[44]*F.Q.*, 6.4.14:

> Ne fed on flesh, ne even of wyld beast
> Did taste the blood, obaying Natures first beheast.

Cf. the exact paraphrase of Ovid in *F.Q.*, 7.7.19. The sentimentality of Shakespeare's Jaques on the subject of killing deer (*A.Y.L.I.*, 2.1), Greenlaw (*op. cit.*, 132–133) traces to Sidney's *Arcadia*.

[45]Professor H. S. V. Jones (*A Spenser Handbook*, New York, 1930, p. 279) comments upon the plan of Book Six: "Further use of similarity and contrast appears in setting the savage who befriends Calepine and Serena over against the hostile savages who in canto 8 take Serena captive. The gentle savage, be it noted, illustrates no democratic or equalitarian faith on Spenser's part; but, on the contrary, the conviction maintained throughout the book that blood will tell (5.1–2)."

the undisciplined savage with gentle instincts may be set Caliban, whose congenital incapacity for discipline is as thorough-going as the other's capacity. Actually, Miranda is the logical counterpart of Spenser's savage in so far as both are gentle and both were placed, early in life, in a primitive environment. Yet it is difficult to conceive how Miranda would have fared without the guiding hand of her father.

III. CYMBELINE

If *The Tempest* embodies Shakespeare's ironic comment upon the paradox of the noble savage, *Cymbeline* may be considered the supplement, for *Cymbeline* fully amplifies the theme of the nobly born who from infancy have lived in savagery. Guiderius and Arviragus, sons of King Cymbeline, have been reared by Belarius, another Prospero, in a cave life similar to that of Spenser's savage and Caliban. Although they are brothers of Imogen, in birth and in experience they are brothers of Miranda; for as Prospero rejoices in his success, so Belarius notes the sparks of noble birth without which his charges would have remained incorrigible as a Caliban (*Cymbeline*, 3.3.79–86):

> How hard it is to hide the sparks of nature! . . .
> and though trained up thus meanly
> I' th' cave wherein they bow, their thoughts do hit
> The roofs of palaces, and nature prompts them
> In simple and lowly things to prince it much
> Beyond the trick of others.

So, with a difference, had Prospero praised Miranda. More nearly, however, Shakespeare is upon the same ground with Spenser in his comments upon the noble savage, whose valor and compassion denote gentility. Further comparison is suggested in the compassionate interest of the two youths for Fidele after Guiderius' valiant victory over

Cloten.[46] With Spenser's pointed commentary may be set the exclamations of Belarius (*Cymbeline,* 4.2.169–181):

> O thou goddess,
> Thou divine Nature, how thyself thou blazon'st
> In these two princely boys! They are as gentle
> As zephyrs blowing below the violet,
> Not wagging his sweet head; and yet as rough
> (Their royal blood enchaf'd) as the rud'st wind . . .
> 'Tis wonder
> That an invisible instinct should frame them
> To royalty unlearn'd, honour untaught,
> Civility not seen from other, valour
> That wildly grows in them but yields a crop
> As if it had been sowed.

Both Shakespeare and Spenser, then, voice the potentialities of Nature when assisted by gentle birth in eliciting physical courage and pity. *The Tempest* and *Cymbeline* stress the necessity also of nurture or discipline, although Belarius modestly attributes to breeding alone the worth of his foster sons. Spenser, too, recognizes that lack of discipline alone distinguishes the noble savage from the noble knight.

Just as Belarius presents analogies with Prospero in perfecting nature, so in his own right he repeats the pastoral rôle of Duke Senior in *As You Like It* and of Spenser's Meliboe in voicing the conventional claims of the country against the town.[47] Yet in *Cymbeline* as in

---

[46]Professor Tillyard, *op. cit.*, p. 35, notes the care with which the sentimental Arviragus is distinguished from the practical, matter-of-fact Guiderius, who kills Cloten and who reproaches his brother for his "wench-like words" over Fidele. Another neglected aspect of the episode is indicated by Professor Greenlaw, *op. cit.*, 153, in Shakespeare's "philosophy of clothes" in the conversation of Cloten with Guiderius.

[47]As in his analysis of *The Winter's Tale,* here too Professor Greenlaw, *op. cit.*, 141, mistakenly identifies the entire episode and the three characters with the pastoral tradition earlier set forth in *As You Like It* and the *Faerie Queene,* Book 6. Only the conventional sentiments of Belarius, on the contrary, reflect directly the tradition of pastoral. In some measure, Shakespeare still is concerned with the theme in *The Tempest,* and only as Belarius repeats the jargon of

The Tempest, Shakespeare seems to affirm that birth and nurture count for almost all: the benefits conferred by the country are negative ones; as a positive woodland influence its virtues are relatively negligible. Allowing for some difference in emphasis, in both the Welsh mountains and Arden's forest the uses of Nature are still the uses of adversity. These, it is true, a Duke Senior can translate into a "quiet and sweet style"; yet even he has seen better days made sweet by the sound of city bells. Belarius, still smarting from wounds suffered at court, leans heavily upon the claims of the country because, as Touchstone remarks, it is not the city. As with Duke Senior, the contrast is heightened by the memory of his wrongs; it is this which "draws us a profit from all things we see." Shakespeare's insistence upon the obvious but necessary distinctions between pastoral commonplace and the realities of primitive existence is disclosed by the conversation in the mountain fastness. Belarius repeats the usual jargon (*Cymbeline,* 3.3.21–26):

> O, this life
> Is nobler than attending for a check,
> Richer than doing nothing for a bribe,
> Prouder than rustling in unpaid-for silk:
> Such gain the cap of him that makes 'em fine
> Yet keeps his book uncross'd. No life to ours!

To this rhetoric both youths offer a spirited rejoinder (*idem.,* 35 ff.):

> *Gui.* Out of your proof you speak. We poor unfledg'd
> Have never wing'd from view of the nest, nor know not
> What air's from home. Haply this life is best
> If quiet life be best, sweeter to you
> That have a sharper known, well corresponding
> With your stiff age; but unto us it is
> A cell of ignorance, traveling abed,
> A prison for a debtor that not dares
> To stride a limit.

Duke Senior does *Cymbeline* betray any kinship with the pastoral tradition.

Arv. What should we speak of
When we are old as you? When we shall hear
The rain and wind beat dark December, how
In this our pinching cave shall we discourse
The freezing hours away? We have seen nothing.
We are beastly: subtle as the fox for prey,
Like warlike as the wolf for what we eat.
Our valour is to chase what flies; our cage
We make a choir, as doth the prison'd bird,
And sing our bondage freely.

Belarius' continued satire of the court does not diminish the new force which the poet has imparted to the time-worn debate between youth and age. Partly, it seems, he is satirizing a convention; yet, as Professor Greenlaw has pointed out,[48] Shakespeare was as fully aware of the values in the contemplative life as of the recreating, restorative power in rural associations. Partly, too, the realistic eloquence of Arviragus is more directly reminiscent of the hard primitivism represented in Caliban's manner of life. This Belarius had declared superior to court life. Like Gonzalo's ideal of a Golden Age, Belarius' cant thus engages Shakespeare's critical attention; the hollowness of both is manifest when brought face to face with the austerities of primitive existence. In this process Spenser shared, not so much by providing ready-made sources as by suggesting to Shakespeare motives, situations, characters upon all of which the dramatist passes judgment. With more distant relation to Spenser, *Timon of Athens* possesses a marked primitivistic interest. Relative to the plays already considered, such tentative conclusions as may be drawn demonstrate the consistency of Shakespeare primitivistic ideas.

IV. Timon of Athens

Criticism of *Timon of Athens* has been almost entirely confined to questions of authorship with a resulting critical neglect of those scenes which are known to be

[48] *Ibid.*, 154.

Shakespeare's. These, it now appears, are definitely pertinent to the foregoing discussion. The rôle of Timon is not unlike that of the other wronged noblemen who through banishment or other cause retreat to the woods and a primitive mode of life. From *As You Like It, Cymbeline,* and *The Tempest, Timon* differs structurally in that here three acts are devoted to the causes which led to retirement; the other plays begin *in medias res* as regards the wronged man whose court miseries are recounted after his withdrawal. Duke Senior enjoys a pastoral security made the more tolerable by his moral reflections and the songs on the subject of ingratitude. Timon bitterly reverts to the savage level of a Caliban. Belarius stands midway between, a man reduced to primitive conditions who yet repeats the conventional joys of content. As the wronged nobleman turned primitive, he is the exact counterpart of Timon. But Belarius remains a subordinate figure both because the poet's sympathies lay with the foster sons and because the other, separate strands of the plot demanded attention. The other play, however, centers in Timon, and it is well known that the last two acts, depicting his primitive existence, absorbed the poet's interest.[49]

Examination of this portion of *Timon of Athens* in relation to the romances discloses a consistent perspective on Shakespeare's part which that play alone voices incompletely. First, it should be noted that the theme of *Timon* reverses the evolutionary process observed in *The Tempest.* Ferdinand, Miranda, Alonso, and Caliban variously illustrate the relation of aristocratic birth to savagery and gentle demeanor; generally the poet dwells upon the working out of the beast. *Timon,* as well as *Lear,* depicts the degeneration of man into the beast. Timon escapes from Athens, which figuratively has become "a wilderness of beasts," but he reverts to the actual physical plane of beasts. Analogy is

[49]Cf. the authoritative analysis by Professor Thomas M. Parrott, *The Problem of Timon of Athens,* The Shakespeare Association, London, 1923.

present in *The Tempest* in so far as the aristocratic Alonso, "worse than a devil," shares the isle with the demi-devil, Caliban.

Professor A. C. Bradley has fully noted the symbolism of *King Lear* and *Timon of Athens* as well as the other links between these plays. "In both plays," he writes,[50] "occur repeated comparisons between man and the beasts; the idea that 'the strain of man's bred out into baboon,' wolf, tiger, fox; the idea that this bestial degradation will end in a furious struggle of all with all, in which the race will perish." These plays present symbolically the converse of that primitivism which finds beasts superior to man. This aspect links these plays with *Hamlet*[51] and distinguishes them from the sentimental humanitarianism of *As You Like It.* In *Timon* this symbolic treatment of bestial degradation fades into the background as *Timon* seeks the bestial plane of life, which then becomes Shakespeare's theme; in *Lear* the comparison between man and beast remains symbolic, and there it is fairly confined to the wild ravings of the king. This significant difference makes *Timon* the more important of the two plays as a contribution to the subject of primitivism.

Two aspects of the play relate to the present inquiry; namely, the relationship of Timon's retirement to Gonzalo's idealism; and the grounds upon which Shakespeare discloses Timon's delusions.

The great eloquence of Timon is the principal adornment of the latter two acts of the play. Betrayed by humanity, he prays that all human institutions, all the appurtenances of civilization be wiped out, with the implication that mankind may revert to the bestial plane of life like his own. A brief excerpt illustrates the direction of his thought (*Timon of Athens,* 4.1.15–21) :

---

[50] *Op. cit.*, p. 246.

[51] The pervasive theme of the struggle between the animal passions and reason in *Hamlet* is stressed by Don. C. Allen, "Shakespeare and the Cosmic Identities, "*S.A.B.*, XIV (1939), 186–188.

> Piety and fear,
> Religion to the gods, peace, justice, truth,
> Domestic awe, night-rest and neighborhood,
> Instruction, manners, mysteries and trades,
> Degrees, observancies, customs and laws,
> Decline to your confounding *contraries*
> And let confusion live!

In the ideal commonwealth Gonzalo "would by *contraries* execute all things"; and further comparison of the passage in which he details these opposites with the above lines discloses a marked similarity despite the context and difference in mood. To Gonzalo these "contraries" describe an earthly paradise. Timon also regards civilization as false and he vaguely envisions a confused state of nature in which, civilization gone, men live like the beasts they resemble. Without sentimental delusions about the kindliness of beasts,[52] Timon yet expects to find in these wilds (*Timon*, 4.1.36),

> Th' unkindest beast more kinder than mankind.

Yet in apparent contradiction of this austerity, like Gonzalo, Timon entertains the delusion of a beneficent nature upon whose lavish abundance an idle humanity may feed. Though not clear-cut, the terms in which this tradition is voiced links this play more closely to those previously considered; especially does Timon's eloquence recall Spenser's naturalism in its feeling of humanity's kinship with the fecund earth; again appears the symbolic "blessed, breeding sun" in its masculine rôle (*Timon*, 4.3.177–186), the earth as:

> Common mother, thou
> Whose womb unmeasurable and infinite breast
> Teems and feeds all,[53] whose selfsame mettle

---

[52]Cf. 4.3.328 ff. in which Timon answers Apemantus, who "would remain a beast with the beasts." Every beast being ruled by a higher one, that is, by degree, Timon recognizes only a survival of the fittest.

[53]Cf. Spenser, "the great earthes wombe" (*F.Q.*, 2.1.60), and "earth out of her fruitfull woomb (*F.Q.*, 2.7.51).

> Whereof thy proud child, arrogant man, is puff't
> Engenders the black toad and adder blue,
> The gilded newt and eyeless venom'd worm,
> With all th' abhorred births below crisp heaven
> Whereon Hyperion's quick'ning fire doth shine—
> Yield him who all thy human sons doth hate,
> From forth thy plenteous bosom, one poor root!

These are the appealing terms of those who sing the Golden Age with the difference that here it is cast in the mold of an intense, cynical hatred of mankind. Like the true primitive, Timon invites the Bandits, who come for gold, to share this life. More Stoic than Cynic perhaps, Timon is convinced that happiness consists in the reduction of wants (*Timon,* 4.3.420–424) :

> Why should you want? Behold, the earth hath roots;
> Within this mile break forth a hundred springs;
> The oaks bear mast, the briers scarlet heps;
> The bounteous housewife Nature on each bush
> Lays her full mess before you. Want? Why want?[54]

To which is returned a more realistic answer (425–426) :

> We cannot live on grass, on berries, water,
> As beasts and birds and fishes.

Imperfectly but clearly the poet brings to bear two distinct charges against Timon's cynicism and against his primitive mode of life. In contrast with the delusion of a soft primitivism one encounters the significant comments

---

[54]This passage is closely similar to Ovid, *Met.,* 1.115–121, thus rendered by Golding (*Shakespeare's Ovid,* ed. W. H. D. Rouse, London, 1904, p. 23) :

> The fertile earth as yet was free, untoucht of spade or plough,
> And yet it yeelded of it selfe of every thing inough.
> And men themselves contented well with plaine and simple foode,
> That on the earth by natures gift without their travell stoode,
> Did live by Raspis, heppes and hawes, by cornells, plummes and cherries,
> By sloes and apples, nuttes and peares, and lothsome bramble berries,
> And by the acornes dropt on ground from *Joves* brode tree in fielde.

Cf. also Lucretius, *D.R.N.,* 5.937 ff.

of Apemantus, the selfish cynic who has played a prophetic rôle from the beginning of the play, where (1.2.284) he had been reviled as "opposite to humanity." What he now speaks to Timon, to whom he brings food, is a blasting comment upon the primitivistic delusion (*Timon,* 4.3.202 ff) :

> This is in thee a nature but infected,
> A poor unmanly melancholy sprung
> From change of fortune. Why this spade? this place?
> This slave-like habit and these looks of care? . . .
> Thou hast cast away thyself, being like thyself;
> A madman so long, now a fool. What, think'st
> That the bleak air, thy boisterous chamberlain,
> Will put thy shirt on warm? Will these moss'd trees,
> That have outliv'd the eagle, page thy heels
> And skip when thou point'st out? Will the cold brook
> Candied with ice, caudle thy morning taste
> To cure thy o'er-night's surfeit? Call the creatures
> Whose naked natures live in all the spite
> Of wreakful heaven, whose bare unhoused trunks,
> To the conflicting elements expos'd,
> Answer mere nature—bid them flatter thee.

Echoing Lear's address to the elements (*Lear,* 3.2), these lines, too, present a Nature shorn of idealistic sentiment; by other means a similar purpose is effected in *The Tempest.* In answer to Apemantus Timon somewhat inconsistently falls back upon an argument in favor of degree, the sweet degrees which earlier he had cursed.[55] Apemantus is "poor rogue hereditary." Never has he (*Timon,* 4.3.352–369) :

> like us from our first swath, proceeded
> The sweet degrees that this brief world affords
> To such as may the passive drugs of it
> Freely command . . .

---

[55]In *Troilus and Cressida,* 1.3.83 ff., Shakespeare seems to affirm his faith in degree, which underlies the stability of the world of man as of the heavens. This current idea of the time Spenser repeatedly voices.

> I to bear this,
> That never knew but better, is some burthen.
> Thy nature did commence in sufferance; time
> Hath made thee hard in't.

Thus Timon seems to confess the bitterness both of his losses and of his bestial lot.

A final point may be suggested as not incongruous with the conclusions thus far. As a major motif in a play left incomplete, the contrast between Timon and Alcibiades yet appears deliberate and clear-cut. Searching for roots, Timon discovers gold, which he heartily damns in accordance with his self-conscious misanthropy. Alcibiades, banished from Athens, shares Timon's bitterness towards his enemies; unlike Timon, however, he is bent upon a just revenge. Having raised an army against the city, he now comes to Timon for gold to pay his soldiers (*Timon*, 4.3.90–92):

> I have but little gold of late, brave Timon,
> The want whereof doth daily make revolt
> In my penurious band.

Timon furnishes gold and urges a general massacre in which he hopes that Alcibiades himself will fall. Later Alcibiades, in his own behalf and Timon's, enters the city of Athens as he submits this promise to the Senators (*Timon*, 5.4.56–63):

> Those enemies of Timon's and mine own
> Whom you yourselves shall set out for reproof
> Fall and no more. And to atone your fears
> With my more noble meaning, not a man
> Shall pass his quarter or offend the stream
> Of regular justice in your city's bounds
> But shall be render'd to your public laws
> At heaviest answer.

Despite the incomplete motivation, the contrast here, as elsewhere in Shakespeare, between the man of action and the man of thought or of feeling is unmistakable. Falling within the scope of this play, the motif may perhaps originally have been intended as the leading one. As

demonstrated in the preceding discussion, Timon exemplifies a phase of primitivistic thought across which passes more than a shadow of the poet's disapproval. In the present instance curses and the uses of adversity, which are his choice, prove weak and ineffectual beside the legitimate uses of gold. Thus the primitive ideal is weighed against that ideal which insists actively upon a restoration of the course of "regular justice." Once more in Athens the laws of man rule, preventing the chaos which Timon had fled and which he had rightly designated as bestial. In Alcibiades' lines, which close the play, an ideal far removed from that of primitive retirement eloquently speaks (*Timon* 5.4.81–84):

> Bring me into your city,
> And I will use the olive with my sword,
> Make war breed peace, make peace stint war, make each
> Prescribe to other, as each other's leech.

THE LETTER DEVICE IN THE FIRST ACT OF *THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA*

By John A. Guinn

The advancement of the plot in Act I of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* is strikingly dependent upon the epistolary convention which Renaissance England obtained from Italian sources. A good deal of dramatic activity centers upon the letter itself—the means by which it is delivered, the manner in which it is received, the treatment which the recipient accords it, and the results it produces. Proteus begins his formal courtship of Julia with a missive which he sends to her by Valentine's servant, Speed. The advent of the letter clearly marks a turning point in Julia's life, for when she next appears, Proteus and she plight their troth.

But Shakespeare did more than merely adopt a convention which came to him from Montemayor, since, as will presently appear, he added to the treatment of the letter episode two significant elements that did not originate with the Portuguese writer. A comparison of corresponding portions from four related works lays the foundation for an endeavor to account for Shakespeare's additions. The action in each case occurs near the beginning of the original. To bring the materials before the reader, I set forth below summaries of the stories in chronological order.

A. *De Duobus Amantibus*, by Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (Pope Pius II):

Lucres, the heroine, falls in love at sight with Eurialus, a visiting courtier. Eurialus instantly reciprocates the passion of Lucres, but the lovers are compelled at first to love only with their eyes. Lucres watches her brilliantly equipped lover ride past her window, feels her love grow, fretfully endures her new sensations, and confides in a faithful servant. Upon receiving the first of a series of letters from Eurialus, she feigns wrath, scolds the bawd who delivers the message for her impertinence, tears the missive into shreds which she treads underfoot and spits on before she casts them into the ashes. The worldly-wise bawd, who was hired to carry the letter, is shrewdly aware that the anger of Lucres is mere pretense. The messenger

gone, Lucres repents her hasty actions, fits the pieces of her lover's note together, reads eagerly and kisses a thousand times the epistle which—since it leads to an answer, to more correspondence, and ultimately to a succession of assignations—marks a crisis in her life.[1]

B. *Nicuola and Lattanzio,* by Matteo Bandello:

Lattanzio Puccini sees Nicuola, loves her at sight, as she does him, and woos her with his eyes. The lovers pine for each other, "and forasmuch as it rarely chanceth that, whenas two lovers are of one mind, there ensueth not that which they desire, Lattanzio found means to write to her and to have a reply from her; but scarce had they agreed upon a means of conversing together when it befell that Ambrogio was constrained to return to Rome."[2]

C. "Felix and Felismena" (from the *Diana*), by Jorge de Montemayor:

Don Felix falls in love with a fair neighbor whom he sees in the garden on summer nights. Felismena's own realization of love is delayed, only to possess her more fiercely when it comes. Don Felix finally decides to write a letter which he sends through Rosina, Felismena's servant, who has been generously flattered and bribed beforehand. The mistress feigns anger and refuses to accept the missive, meanwhile berating the saucy messenger. Rosina dissembles, cunningly aware that Felismena is curious to see the letter. After much worry and a sleepless night, the heroine secures the letter which Rosina has slyly dropped. More deception follows, but Felismena, in whose life the letter is a turning-point, finally confesses to her servant the truth of her suddenly born love for the lover to whom she has not yet talked.[3]

D. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona,* by William Shakespeare:

Lucetta, after praising Proteus, answers Julia's "I would I knew his mind" by presenting her with a letter from Proteus. Julia feigns anger, orders her maid to return the letter, sends the maid away, and reflects:

> And yet I would I had o'erlooked the letter:
> It were a shame to call her back again
> And pray her to a fault for which I chid her.

---

[1]Summary is based on a reprint, edited by Henry H. Gibbs, of an early (1567) English translation appearing in Vol. XCVI (1873, pp. 113–161) of the Roxburghe Club publications.

[2]John Payne, trans., *The Novels of Matteo Bandello* (London, 1890), IV, 126.

[3]Summary based on English translation reprinted in *Shakespeare's Library,* ed. W. C. Hazlitt (2d ed.; London, 1875), Part I, Vol. I, pp. 275–312.

> What a fool is she, that knows I am a maid,
> And would not force the letter to my view![4]

Lucetta is recalled upon slight pretext, and she contrives to drop the letter, which Julia picks up. As in the case of Felismena, the heroine here affects to believe that the letter is one of her servant's love letters. Lucetta snatches the letter, pretends to run, and is pinched and slapped for her playfulness. When she states that the letter is from Proteus, Julia, to keep up her pretense, tears up the message. The maid is not deceived by the conduct of her mistress. Lucetta gone, Julia, suiting actions to words in a pretty and comparatively long[5] soliloquy, repents, picks up the pieces, and lovingly examines them amid a shower of kisses for the fragments.

De Duobus Amantibus (1444) was so many times reproduced, translated, and adapted, under various titles, that it has been correctly described as "one of the most read stories of the whole Renaissance."[6] Firmly established as a landmark in European fiction, the novel long continued to exert influence upon later writers and their works.[7] The most obvious, and therefore the more frequently mentioned, contribution of Piccolomini's novel to later Renaissance fiction is in connection with the epistolary convention. Kany, whose generalization is the product of an ambitious study and review of the letter-device from the earliest beginnings, designates Aeneas Sylvius as "one

---

[4]I, ii, 50–54. I quote from the edition by Charles Washburn Nichols ("The Arden Shakespeare"; Boston, 1931), p. 8.

[5]Twenty-six lines (I, ii, 104–129).

[6]Howard J. Savage, "The Beginnings of Italian Influence in English Prose Fiction," *PMLA*, XXXII (1917), 76.

[7]It is unnecessary to discuss here the extent and variety of this influence, although by way of illustration it may be pointed out that Gustave Reynier (*Le Roman Sentimental avant l'Astrée*, Paris, 1908, pp. 28 ff., and *passim*) assigns Piccolomini's novel a significant place in the history of the sentimental novel in France. Savage (*op. cit.*, pp. 2–3) supports a broader claim in speaking of the influence of the novel on English fiction. He states: "*Lucres*, so far as I know, was the first English translation of an Italian *novella* for its own sake, and with it the influence of Italy upon Elizabethan prose fiction may be said to have begun."

of the first prose storytellers in modern literature to use the letter device."[8]

Since Spain is known to have shared with other European countries the widespread enthusiasm for *De Duobus Amantibus*,[9] and inasmuch as certain writers of Spanish fiction during the Renaissance were rather positively under obligation to the novel,[10] it is not unreasonable to suspect Montemayor of having obtained, for use in "The Shepherdess Felismena," the letter device directly from Aeneas Sylvius. But it is not necessary to rely on mere suspicion.

Montemayor probably took his prose tale of Felix and Felismena from Bandello's prose story of Nicuola and Lattanzio.[11] Bandello, however, as the preceding summary shows, makes practically nothing of the letter, whereas Montemayor obviously placed a great deal of emphasis upon the letter, for which, as has been said, he may have resorted to Aeneas Sylvius. Like Eurialus, Bandello's hero shows his love in pantomime, rides often by the heroine's house on a spirited horse, determines to write a letter, and arranges with a female intermediary to have it delivered. Rosina, like the bawd in Piccolomini's novel,

---

[8]Charles E. Kany, *The Beginnings of the Epistolary Novel in France, Italy, and Spain*, in *University of California Publications in Modern Philology*, Vol. XXI (1937), No. 1, p. 39.

[9]A Spanish edition cited by Gibbs (ed. Roxburghe text, *op. cit.*, p. iii) was published at Seville in 1512. The significance of this edition and of Piccolomini's novel generally is attested to by D. W. Menéndez y Pelayo in *Origenes de la Novela* ("Nueva Bibliotheca de Autores Españoles"; Madrid, 1925), I, 285.

[10]Menéndez y Pelayo (*op. cit.*, p. 286), for example, points out that Aeneas added the epistolary form to the resources of Boccaccio, and that this innovation was adopted in Spain.

[11]The same version of an old, popular, and widely available story plot which supplied Barnabe Riche, perhaps through Belleforest, with most of the materials for *Apolonius and Silla*, still accepted by many scholars as the principal source for Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. *Gl'Ingannati* may, indeed, have "furnished the plot" of "Nicuola and Lattanzio" and "served as the basis of the story" of "The Shepherdess Felismena," as Hart points out in the Introduction (p. ix) of his edition of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* ("The Tudor Shakespeare," New York, 1929).

is sternly rebuked for her impudence by the heroine, but understands clearly enough her mistress' malady. After Felismena has read the letter, the text of which is given, she frames a discouraging reply, the text of which is also given. Like its archetype in *De Duobus Amantibus*, Felismena's reply discourages Felix's suit, but ends on a note of hope. As in the earlier story, amorous letters continue to be sent by both lovers until the lover, in great sorrow, is compelled to leave his pining mistress to go to an out-of-town court.

Thus far it would appear that Montemayor was indebted to Piccolomini's novel because (1) the latter was available in a prodigious number of versions, including at least one in Spanish, (2) Montemayor could have shared with other authors of Spanish works the influence of Aeneas Sylvius, and (3) Montemayor's actual use of the letter is strongly reminiscent, not of the principal source of the story, but of *De Duobus Amantibus*, a pioneer production in its relationship to the epistolary convention in modern fiction. Several further considerations may be regarded as strengthening the ties between Montemayor and Aeneas Sylvius. First, Montemayor is credited[12] with exerting some influence upon the later English usage of mixing prose with poetry in narrative. In this respect Montemayor, as well as the other writers mentioned in the same connection, were preceded by popular French and Italian versions of Piccolomini's novel.[13] Secondly, Montemayor

---

[12]See Leicester Bradner, "The First English Novel: A Study of George Gascoigne's *Adventures of Master F. J.*," *PMLA*, XLV (1930), 547.

[13]The numerous 15th and 16th century Italian versions of the novel by Braccesi incorporate a poem with each letter of the lovers, and several occasional poems closely related to episodes in the story are added here and there. See Giovanni Zannoni, "Per la Storia di due amanti," *Atti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei, Rendiconti*, Serie Quarta (Rome, 1890), VI, 122–126; and Elise Richter, ed., *Eurialus und Lukrezia übersetzt von Octavien de Saint-Gelais* (Halle, 1914), "Einleitung," pp. vi–ix. The French version by Saint-Gelays, dated 1493, is all in verse, but the translation by Anthitus, dated 1490 by

by 1559 or 1560 was about as disgusted with court life at Valladolid as Aeneas had been at Vienna,[14] and therefore had had some real occasion to be sympathetic toward and interested in the former Pope through the latter's widely read *Miseriae Curialium* (1444), which Barclay adapted to the pastoral in England. One is almost inclined to wonder whether it is more than a coincidence that Montemayor, too, after or during his experiences at Valladolid, sought in *La Diana* an avenue of escape from court evils.

On the assumption that the letter device in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* came from "The Shepherdess Felismena," and that Montemayor received it directly from *De Duobus Amantibus,* Shakespeare could be said to be indebted at second hand to Aeneas Sylvius. Far more interesting, however, is the evidence that Shakespeare was, independently of Montemayor, under direct, if slight, obligation to Aeneas Sylvius.

Piccolomini's novel was not only available to Shakespeare in many foreign-language versions, but had been published in English at least four times by 1567.[15] In short, the work was far more easily accessible to the author of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* than, say, the *Diana,* or,

---

Richter (*op. cit.*, p. x) and 1497 by Reynier (*op. cit.*, p. 29), mixes prose and verse, though not in the same way as in Braccesi's version.

[14]For statements about the unhappiness of Aeneas Sylvius at the Court of Frederick III see Georg Voigt's three-volume biography, *Enea Silvio de Piccolomini, als Papst Pius der Zweite, und sein Zeitalter* (Berlin, 1856–63), principally I, 278–279, and II, 288–289; or Beatrice White, ed., *The Eclogues of Alexander Barclay, EETS* (Original Series), CLXXV (1928), "Notes," p. 219. For related facts about Montemayor I have relied chiefly on Menéndez y Pelayo (*op. cit.*, pp. CDXX ff.).

[15]The first, published at Antwerp, is included by Arundell Esdaile in *A List of English Tales and Prose Romances Printed before 1740* ("Bibliographical Society" publications; London, 1912), p. 1. It is conjecturally dated "c.1515" by Robert Proctor, Vol. II of *Illustrated Monographs* ("Bibliographical Society" publications; London, 1894), p. 24. The other three editions are dated 1550 ?, 1560, and 1567 in *A Short-Title Catalogue.*

in fact, most other works of the Renaissance. The really significant point, however, is that Shakespeare added to the initial letter episode of "The Shepherdess Felismena" two striking elements, possibly suggested to him by *De Duobus Amantibus:* (1) The heroine, feigning wrath, tears the letter into pieces which she disdainfully throws down; and (2) the heroine lovingly retrieves the fragments which she caresses and kisses.[16] Shakespeare could indeed have originated these additions, but the fact that they stand out as a unique and integrated artifice in a single play suggests his recourse to some earlier writer.

A natural question is, Where else could Shakespeare have got the idea for the details he added to the letter incident? An unequivocal reply would have to embrace a survey of oceans of Renaissance fiction. Yet on the basis of an intensive, if incomplete, survey, it appears likely that Shakespeare resorted to *De Duobus Amantibus* for the particulars under consideration.

Bond observes that the half dozen letters in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* recall Lyly's novel.[17] Lyly, whose *Euphues* may be looked upon as much as a manual of epistolography as a novel, does use many letters, usually setting forth the full text, but the elements that belong to our problem are not all present. For example, Euphues having received an angry letter from Philautus is "well content" with the "contents," and proceeds to answer "his taunts in these gibing tearmes";[18] Euphues sends his well-known "cooling Carde for Philautus and all fond lovers";[19] Callimachus finds in a chest a letter full of

---

[16]The first element is partially repeated, also as a departure from Montemayor, in IV, iv, where Julia, disguised, delivers a letter and ring to Silvia. Silvia promptly tears the letter. In II, i, another letter figures prominently in the relationships of lovers. This time Speed is the go-between.

[17]R. Warwick Bond, ed., *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Indianapolis, n.d.), "Introduction," p. xxx.

[18]R. Warwick Bond, ed., *The Complete Works of John Lyly* (Oxford, 1902), I, 235.

[19]*Ibid.*, I, 246.

advice from his dead father, Cassander;[20] Philautus delivers to Camilla a letter cleverly concealed in a "fayre Pomegranet,"[21] and Camilla later venomously replies in a letter which she seeks to deliver "stitched into an Italian Petrark";[22] Camilla dispatches a cruel letter to Philautus "by hir man," and Philautus, though "he tare his haire, rent his clothes, and fell from the passions of a Louer to the panges of Phrensie," presently regains his wits and sends a reply to Camilla by her own letter carrier;[23] Camilla burns a letter, determined never to write to Philautus again.[24] But these and numerous similar instances of letters in Lyly did not give Shakespeare any specific suggestion for his handling of the letter episode in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona.*

Among the fifty-two letters incorporated into the body of the prose works of Robert Greene,[25] one is angrily thrown away, later read,[26] another is sent from Rodento to Pasylla by an old gentlewoman suspected of being an "old Pandar,"[27] a third is received by Fiordespine, who in high dudgeon casts it into the fire,[28] and still another is flung away "with great disdaine," by its recipient.[29] In *Philomela* the heroine does actually tear the letter "into a thousand pieces,"[30] which she later assembles so as to reread the letter. But this letter to Philomela does not come from a real lover; it is read immediately after it is delivered by the writer; and the reassembled pieces of the letter give no joy to the heroine. The fragments are

---

[20] *Ibid.*, II, 16.
[21] *Ibid.*, II, 125.
[22] *Ibid.*, II, 129.
[23] *Ibid.*, II, 140.
[24] *Ibid.*, II, 141.
[25] The count is based on the text edited by Alexander B. Grosart, *The Life and Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Robert Greene* ("The Huth Library"; London, 1881–1886).
[26] By Pharicles in *Mamillia* (Ibid., II, 102, 118).
[27] "Venus Tragedy" in *Planetomachia* (V, 64 ff.).
[28] The first tale in *Alcida: Greenes Metamorphosis* (IX, 29 ff.).
[29] Lidia in *Orpharion* (XII, 40).
[30] XI, 145.

not caressed or kissed by a heroine who has feigned disinterest in the letter. There is no romantic connection between sender and receiver.

In Gascoigne's *The pleasant Fable of Ferdinando Jeronimi and Leonora de Valasco,* Elinor feigns anger when she hands a letter to Ferdinando. The latter believing that he is getting his own letter back, walks off, flies into a rage, and vents his wrath on the "poore paper," which he presently does "rend and teare in peeces."[32] Ferdinando discovers his error, picks up the torn pieces of the letter, arranges them, and reads. This episode in Gascoigne's novel bears some resemblance to Shakespeare's use of the letter convention in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona,* but it is obviously not what Shakespeare had in mind when he wrote Act I of the play.

Thomas Lodge's works provide the instance of a lover's letter which is read, torn up by the lady who receives and ultimately answers it.[33] Even less grist for the mill in the present inquiry may be found in the prose works or collections of Nashe, Riche, Painter, Fenton, Pettie, Bandello, Straparola, and several others. So far as I know, the only work which could be cited as a completely satisfactory source for Shakespeare's additions to the letter episode which he dramatized from "The Shepherdess Felismena," is *De Duobus Amantibus.*[34]

From the evidence adduced it appears that Montemayor was indebted to Aeneas Sylvius for the particular manner

---

[31]John W. Cunliffe, ed., *The Complete Works of George Gascoigne* ("Cambridge English Classics"; Cambridge, 1907–10).

[32]*Ibid.,* I, 385.

[33]*Euphues Shadow,* in *The Complete Works of Thomas Lodge* (Printed for the Hunterian Club; Glasgow, 1883), Vol. II, No. VII, p. 58.

[34]Though the merest reference to chance parallels between Shakespeare's play and Piccolomini's novel would be idle, it may not be amiss to remark in passing that several echoes of *De Duobus Amantibus* in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona,* are, where these echoes mark divergences from Montemayor on the part of Shakespeare, interesting.

in which he used the letter convention as a significant instrumentality in forwarding the plot in "The Shepherdess Felismena," and that Shakespeare, in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona,* not only adapted the device from Montemayor, but, independently of the latter, was also under direct obligation to Aeneas Sylvius for his treatment of the letter episode.

THE EARLY CAREER OF *FARCE* IN THE THEATRICAL VOCABULARY

BY LEO HUGHES

The term *farce* has had an interesting history in English.[1] Today it is restricted almost entirely to its derived sense of boisterous dramatic composition; but *farce* did not enter theatrical vocabulary until the Restoration, though the word itself was current in English soon after the Norman Conquest.

Farce is derived from Latin *farcire,* to stuff or fill; it seems to have been first employed by the English as a term of cookery; for medieval and renaissance cook-books speak of farcing a goose, a turkey, a pie. Even in its early history, however, *farce* was not confined to the kitchen. Chaucer, in describing his Friar, observes that his "typet" was "ay farsed ful of knyves."[2]

The next step, the figurative application, was an easy one. Again Chaucer will serve very well in supplying an example: In *The Legend of Good Women,* he speaks of "wordes farsed with plesaunce."[3] In this last sense the term was to be employed for the next two centuries and more. A few examples will suffice. In *Henry V,* the king, lamenting the heavy responsibilities and empty rewards of royalty, soliloquizes:

> I am a King that find thee; and I know
> 'Tis not the balm, the sceptre and the ball,
> The sword, the mace, the crown imperial,
> The intertissued robe of gold and pearl,
> The farced title running 'fore the king.[4]

---

[1]The *N. E. D.* must, of course, be the basis or beginning of such a study as this; I have depended on it for some of the information from pre-Restoration times. For the remainder of the materials I have gone to the original works themselves.

[2]*Prologue to the Canterbury Tales,* l.233.

[3]l.1373.

[4]Act IV, scene i, 279–283.

The nearest suspicion of a theatrical use of *farce* in pre-Restoration times occurs in the work of Ben Jonson, who speaks with characteristic acerbity of his opponents' using "stale apothegmes . . . to farce their Scenes withall."[5] But here the connection with the theatre is an accidental one.

The history of farce in the theatre begins in France during the Middle Ages, and, according to a well-established theory, it may be traced back to the liturgical origins of the drama itself.

> Dans le langage liturgigue, la farce fut une interpolation, une sorte de paraphrase que l'on mêlait au texte consacré de l'office canonique. On lit ainsi dans de vieux *cérémoniaux: 'Le Kyrie eleison* se chantera aux jours de fête *avec farce.'* . . . Quoiqu'on ne voie guère au premier abord quelle ressemblance il peut exister entre ces interpolations, généralement graves et sérieuses, et les farces de théâtre dont une gaiete licencieuse paraît le caractère commun et principal; il est certain néanmoins que l'origine du mot est la même dans toutes ses acceptions.[6]

The development of a vernacular religious drama in England parallels that in France, but no such close resemblance exists between the developments in the secular drama in the two countries. In France the acting of both religious and non-religious plays fell into the hands of the various amateur societies of actors; among these, particularly *les confréries joyeuses, les Basochiens,* and *les Enfants-sans-Souci,* there developed a whole host of brief, boisterous, often quite vulgar plays to which the title *farce* was attached.[7] One looks in vain, however, for a similar development in England. Whatever the cause, no such societies of amateur actors came into being, and conse-

---

[5]Introduction to *Cynthia's Revels.*

[6]L. Petit de Julleville, *La Comédie et les Moeurs en France au Moyen Age,* Paris, 1886, 52–53.

[7]L. Petit de Julleville, *Les Comédiens en France au Moyen Age,* Paris, 1885.

quently no development of farce occurred.[8] The existence in English literature of a few isolated plays of undoubtedly farcical cast makes this general absence all the more striking. The *Secunda Pastorum* is an excellent indication of the potentialities, but it is almost wholly isolated. An even closer parallel to French farce is to be found in a much later group of plays, the interludes of John Heywood, for which parallels, if not sources, may be found in contemporary or earlier French drama.[9] Yet he invariably called his pieces *interludes*, a term which seems to have been applied with equal readiness to Heywood's lively little plays or to such pious dramas as the *Temptation of Our Lord.*

It is curious to find a different story in Scotland. Considerably closer in spirit to the French, the Scotch borrowed the term *farce* and used it with some frequency to describe dramatic performances. That the type of play indicated by this word (in all its protean manifestations of Scotch orthography) was identical with the French farce, there is every reason to doubt. Miss Mill suggests that in Scotland *farce* referred to the machine-play rather than to rough, homely comedy.[10] Certainly the little comic interim called "The Puir Man and the Pardoner," which Sir David Lyndsay inserted between two more elevated parts of his *Thrie Estaitis*, would come very near fitting the characteristics for farce, in the broad modern sense at least; yet Lyndsay called it an "interlude," using the English term. Not that Lyndsay himself did not know or

---

[8]"There is nothing in England corresponding to the plentiful production of farces by amateur associations of every kind which characterized fifteenth century France. . . . The early suppression of the Feast of Fools and the strict control kept over the Boy Bishop afforded no starting-point for *sociétés joyeuses*, while the late development of English as a literary language did not lend itself to the formation of *puys*." E. K. Chambers, *The Mediaeval Stage*, Oxford, 1903, II, 197–198.

[9]Karl Young, "The Influence of French Farce upon the Plays of John Heywood," *Modern Philology*, II (1904), 97–124.

[10]Anna Jean Mill, *Mediaeval Plays in Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1927.

use the French word. In his *Testament of Papyngo* (1530) he speaks of "ballattis, farses, and . . . plesand playis." Moreover, a sixteenth century editor of Lyndsay's works refers to him as the author of "Fairsis and publict Playis,"[11] whatever the writer had in mind. All this is not to insist that the Scotch had a definite dramatic *genre* unknown in the England of that day, but to suggest that the Scotch were under a greater obligation to the French than the English were—for a term if not for a dramatic form.

The English were not affected by any desire to borrow either name or use from their neighbors, and apparently remained impervious throughout the first two Stuart reigns. So far as I have been able to ascertain, the first use of the word in England to describe a dramatic performance occurs in 1629, and under very interesting circumstances. A French troupe came to London in that year, doubtless at the personal invitation of the French queen of Charles I, and played for several days. In the records of Sir Henry Herbert, the Master of Revels, one finds under November 4: "For the allowinge of a French company to playe a farse at Blackfryers . . . 2 *l.*"[12] Whether or not the performance which Herbert records was actually a farce would be hard to say. Certainly the French troupe had serious plays in its repertory, but there is nothing to prevent their having played a farce. Their chances of succeeding with a less subtle type of play certainly must have been better than if they had played a more profound one, and on this occasion they must have been driven to every resource to please.[13] The 1629 record seems to be unique; neither word nor dramatic form (if the French troupe presented it) stuck.

---

[11]Henry Charteris, cited by Miss Mill, *op. cit.*, 78.

[12]J. Q. Adams, *The Dramatic Records of Sir Henry Herbert*, New Haven, 1917, 59; note that Brande and Prynne (quoted by Adams) use "comedye" and "play" in referring to the performance.

[13]Adams, *loc. cit.*, quotes Thomas Brande's remark, which shows that the French troupe was none too warmly received: "Glad I am to saye they were hissed, hooted, and pippen-pelted from the stage, so as I do not thinke they will soon be ready to try the same againe."

With the Restoration the history of *farce* is no longer so easy to trace. No longer was the word used, on rare occasions, to mean merely to stuff, to pad, to inflate, as in the days of Shakespeare and Jonson. That meaning was kept, to be sure. The important thing here, however, is the adoption of the word into the dramatic terminology, in imitation of the French. How accurately the English used *farce*, and what it meant to Restoration critics and commentators, must be ascertained; but before attacking the problem directly, I should like to speak briefly about another—and, to the English, new—figurative use of the term. From using *farce* to apply to a theatrical performance, the object of which is to arouse laughter, it is an easy step to using the word to describe anything ridiculous. Such an opportunity was not long neglected. In a revival of Jonson's *Silent Woman*, at Whitehall, in November, 1660, in the prologue the term "Farse" is used to describe the government which has just been forced to abdicate.[14] The analogy to the theatre is kept throughout. Here is an example not only of the strong animosity of the powers of the day toward the preceding rulers, but also an example of how the word *farce* could be used as a term of opprobrium, a cudgel with which to belabor an opponent—an opponent in the government or in the theatre.

This use of the term to indicate the activity of a political antagonist occurs again during the period, as in Crowne's *English Friar* (1690), where the "Popish" activities of the priests during the reign of James II are spoken of as "farce." Somewhat different, but suggestive of the same type of thing, is the savage satire on the fugitive king, written in the same year and called *The Royal Flight: or, The Conquest of Ireland. A New Farce.* Dryden used the expression in his epilogue recited at the initial performance of the united company, November,

---

[14]Quoted by A. G. Noyes, *Ben Jonson on the English Stage*, Cambridge, Mass., 1935, 176.

1682, to refer to the noisy rabble of fops in the pit who made it difficult for an attentive playgoer to enjoy the performance—

> These noisy Sirs so loud their Parts rehearse,
> That oft the Play is silenc'd by the Farce.[15]

Though *farce* is used ordinarily to describe or refer to a scene or bit of action, it may be applied to a character. In D'Avenant's *The Rivals* (1664) Leucilla calls Cunopes a "farse."[16] One of the characters in Ravenscroft's *Careless Lovers* (1673) refers to another as "a meer Farce!"[17] Twenty years later the word is applied to a figure beyond, or outside the world of the theatre, in Robert Gould's poem "The Corruption of the Times by Money. A Satyr" (1693), in which a young fop parading the streets in all his sartorial finery is referred to as "a farce."

It would be a mistake, of course, to leave the impression that *farce* was used more often figuratively than as a designation of a theatrical *genre*. Quite the contrary, it was immediately adopted into the stage vocabulary after the Restoration, and used with great abandon to describe a confusing array of things. It was, for example, employed throughout the entire period from 1660 to 1700 to label any piece of comic action—preferably involving trickery or practical jokes—on the stage. In Lacy's *Old Troop* (1665) the Lieutenant calls Raggou's choice of hanging or of marrying the old *femme de guerre*, Doll, a farce which might turn out as a tragedy or a comedy.[18] Antonio invites Marcello, in Maidwell's *Loving Enemies* (1670), to see his farce of putting Circumstantio into the pillory because of his penchant for bombast.[19] Mrs. Behn uses

---

[15]Montague Summers, *The Works of Thomas Otway*, London, 1926, I, 234.

[16]Act. II.

[17]Act II, scene i.

[18]Act V.

[19]Act I, scene i.

the term similarly in two of her comedies[20] to describe a bit of stage trickery wherein gullible old men are fooled. The contemporary use of the term is confusing if one trusts implicitly in the accuracy of the user. The word may be applied to a scene in a play which could never be described as farcical—for that matter, to a scene which is not farcical in itself. This hazy kind of usage occurs several times in the last decade of the century, in Congreve's *Love for Love* (1695), where Valentine calls his playing sick a farce;[21] or, again, in Cibber's *Woman's Wit* (1696), where the term is used on two different occasions to apply to parts of the intrigue which could hardly with any accuracy be termed farcical.[22]

The same lack of definiteness is shown in the application of *farce* to a type of dramatic production which we should now designate as burlesque or travesty. Langbaine applies the word, in speaking of D'Avenant's *Play-House to be Lett* (1662), not only to the second act, the adaptation of *Sganarelle,* but to the travestied *Caesar, Antony and Cleopatra* which forms the fifth act.[23] The famous *Rehearsal* was almost invariably called *farce* during the Restoration period. The same appellation was used to refer to Duffett's burlesques of the spectacular productions of Settle and Shadwell in the rival theatre of the Duke's company; *The Empress of Morocco* was printed, in 1674, with the descriptive term "A Farce" on the title page.

In a slightly different category are certain plays—unacted, and very likely not designed for the stage—which Allerdyce Nicoll, in his "Handlist," designates as "political pamphlets written in the form of plays" but which were printed as "farces."[24] *Pluto Furens & Vinctus* (1669)—which I have been unable to examine—is called "A Modern

---

[20]*False Count,* Act IV, scene ii; *Emperor of the Moon,* Act I.

[21]Act IV.

[22]Act II, scene v.

[23]*An Account of the English Dramatick Poets,* London, 1691, 110.

[24]*A History of Restoration Drama,* Cambridge, 1928, 348 ff.

Farse."[25] A work which I have examined, and which I presume to be much in the manner of *Pluto*, is *The Royal Flight* (1690), mentioned above. It is similarly described on the title page as "A New Farce," although it is really nothing more than a savage satire of the type current in the 1680's. Again, the anonymous satire upon the Lord Mayor, *The Puritanical Justice*, printed in 1698, is described on the title page as being "By Way of Farce."[26]

By the end of the Restoration period, *farce* is used to describe almost any kind of stage performance which does not meet with the approval of the devotees or supporters of literary drama, as, for example, when the author of *A Comparison between Two Stages* calls the singing-and-dancing acts which had grown so popular near the turn of the century "one of the pleasantest Farces they have."[27] In short, there are many evidences that *farce* was used indiscriminately as a word-of-all-work, a handy label to describe something which did not meet with the user's approval, and it was used more than once by bitter rivals as a means of dismissing with a scornful gesture the literary works of an enemy.[28]

Something should be said, however, of the more accurate use of the term, in the years following 1660, to describe comic business, the "stuffings" of the stage. A striking example of this occurs in the account of the printing of *The Wits, or Sport upon Sport.* I have not been able to examine the *Actaeon and Diana* of 1655–6, but I am told by Dr. J. J. Elson, editor of the Cox-Kirkman-Marsh farrago, that *farce* was not applied to any of the pieces

---

[25]*Ibid.*

[26]I have not seen this piece; it is listed by Montague Summers in his *Bibliography of the Restoration Drama*, London, n.d., 136.

[27]P. 45; see also Pepys's description of the little boy's part in Shadwell's *Sullen Lovers*—"A little boy, for a farce, do dance Polichinelli." May 2, 1668.

[28]Shadwell, in *The Medal of John Bayes*, blusters at Dryden:

> How low thy Farce! And thy blank Verse how mean!
> How poor, how naked did appear each Scene!

therein. Yet in the 1662 edition of *The Wits,* Marsh describes four of the five independent "drolls" as farces, using such expressions as: "Argument needless. It being a Thorow Farce, and very well known," or "A continued Farce," or "an ancient Farce, and generally known." In the 1673 edition of *The Wits,* by Kirkman, the title-page for the whole collection designates the contents as "a curious Collection of several Drols and Farces," whereas Marsh had been content to describe his 1662 edition as "Select Pieces of Drollery," applying *farce* to the four independent pieces only.

That this word was a newcomer to the language is borne out by a little scene from D'Avenant's hodge-podge, *The Play-House to be Lett,* which Allardyce Nicoll supposes to have been played in 1662, the same year that Marsh produced his full collection of drolls. In Act I the House-Keeper, the Tire-Woman, and an English Player are approached by a Monsieur who wishes to rent the theatre during the vacation now in progress.

House-K. What would you do in't? we must like your trade
Before we let our shop, lest we should ride
With John Dory to Paris to seek rent.
Mons. Mi vil make presentation of de farce.
Tire-W. Farces, what be those? New French bobs for ladies?
Play. Pray, peace! I understand the gentleman.
Your farces are a kind of mongrel plays.
But, sir, I believe all French farces are
Prohibited commodities, and will
Not pass current in England.
Mons. Sir, pardon me! de Engelis be more
Fantastique den de Fransh. De farce
Bi also very fantastique and vil passe.
Play. The Monsieur's in the right for we have found
Our customers of late exceeding humorous.
Mons. De vise nation bi for tings heroique
And de fantistique, vor de farce!
Tire-W. I like not that these French pardonney moys
Should make so bold with old England.
House-K. Peace, woman! We'll let the house, and get money,
Play. But how will your French farce be understood?

For all our travell'd customers are gone
To take the air with their own wives, beyond
Hide-Park a great way; a homely country mode
Of their fore-fathers.
Tire-W. With grief we speak it;
They may be asham'd to leave their poor mistresses
And us behind 'em without customers.
Play. Pray save your tears for our next tragedy.
The Monsieur's all for merry farces, but,
As I said, sir, how shall we understand 'em?
Mons. Me have a troop of French Comoediens
Dat speak a little very good Engelis.
Tire-W. Bless us! a troop?
Play. Woman, thou art no linguist; they in France
Call a company of players, a troop.
Tire-W. I thought he had ta'en our long Tennis-Court
For a stable.
Play. And you are shelling beans for his horses.

This scene, which may refer to the visit in 1661 of Channouveau and his company, tells of a new dispensation for the English stage, a modification of comic practice, or at least a willingness to recognize (and to name) a *tertium quid* which had really always accompanied English tragedy and comedy but which was now to become far more important in the fare of theatregoers. There is every evidence that the French visit of 1661 is an all-important event in the history of *farce,* that is, in the use of the word. Plays of unquestionably farcical tone had been published at a time just previous to this, but had not been described as farces. Cokain brought out his *Trappolin* in 1658, but, although he admitted having taken it from a comedy he had seen in Venice (most likely a *commedia dell'arte* performance),[29] he called it "an Italian Trage-Comedy"; and even in the prologue and epilogue which he wrote, possibly with a hope that his play might some day see the stage, he failed to use the term *farce.* Even in 1661 Francis Kirkman, who was to publish a collection of "Drols and Farces" some twelve years later,

[29]Kathleen M. Lea "Sir Aston Cokayne and the 'Comedia dell'arte,'" *Modern Language Review,* XXIII (1928), 47 ff.

called the farce-interlude *Tom Tyler* merely *play*. Then came the French comedians and set a new fashion.

Pepys evidently did not encounter the same difficulties which troubled D'Avenant's Tire-Woman in *The Play-House to be Lett*. When he went to see the troupe of Frenchmen perform, he came away with no great fondness for what he had seen; yet he seems not to have been without the proper word to describe the foreign novelty, for he comments that "there being nothing pleasant but the foolery of the farce, we went home."[30] Too little is known about the Frenchmen's repertory for one to be certain what "the farce" was, but I am inclined to think that it was a brief afterpiece, such as the farce Molière is said to have played after *Nicomede*, at his initial appearance before Louis XIV on October 24, 1658.[31] Pepy's use of the term, however, leaves much to be desired. His use of *farce* to describe the "Polichinelli" dance in *The Sullen Lovers* is certainly very loose. Possibly somewhat more elaborate was Lacy's entertainment between the acts of *Horace*, January 19, 1669. "Lacy hath made a farce of several dances—between each act one: but his words are but silly, and invention not extraordinary, as to the dances; only some Dutchmen come out of the mouth and tail of a Hamburgh sow." Alongside this delicate bit of Lacy's may be set Dryden's extremely popular adaptation of *L'Etourdi, Sir Martin Mar-all*, which Pepys saw more than a year earlier.[32] This piece, he thought, was

> the most entire piece of mirth, a complete farce from one end to the other that certainly ever was writ. I never laughed so in all my life. I laughed till my head ached all the evening and night with the laughing; and at very good wit therein, not fooling.

That Pepys approved of Dryden's adaptation whole-heartedly is attested by his nine recorded trips to the play, with

---

[30]August 30, 1661.

[31]See the *Grands Ecrivains* edition by Despois-Mesnard, I, 3 ff.

[32]August 16, 1667.

ever-increasing enthusiasm. Why then did he call it "farce" on his first trip and "undoubtedly the best comedy ever . . . wrote" on his last? Yet his use of the term is typical of his period, since *farce* could mean a great many things in the first few decades after the Restoration.

Something should be said, finally, about the treatment *farce* received at the hands of the lexicographers of the period. Here, as might be suspected, the account is a similar one though much briefer to render. Postponing for a moment the study of English dictionaries, I should like to call attention to scattered examples of bilingual or polyglot dictionaries. In none of the English-Latin lexicons[33] of the period before 1660 is *farce* defined in terms of the theatre. Such authorities as Thomas Thomas, Thomas Cooper, and John Rider or his reviser, Francis Holyoke, are in virtually complete agreement in defining the word as "stuff, cram," etc. Nor does *farce* occur in any of the definitions of theatrical terms: *interludium, exodium, pantomimus,* and the like, in the Latin-English divisions of these works. With the Restoration, however, Adam Littleton and Elisha Coles found it necessary to expand the vocabularies of their Latin dictionaries to allow room for additional definitions of the English *farce* or the Latin *exodium,* though none of these later renditions of the word are full or accurate enough to aid in fixing the limits of the *genre.*

The modern language dictionaries of the period are more interesting than the classical, since it was from seventeenth century French that the term was introduced. Furthermore, the French, the Italians, and the Spanish had all used a form of Latin *farcire* in the theatres for

[33] I have consulted the following editions: Thomas Cooper, *Thesaurus linguae Romanae & Britannicae,* London, 1565; Thomas Thomas, *Dictionarium linguae latinae et anglicanae, Cantabrigiae,* 1589; Francis Holyoke, *Dictionarium Etymologicum Latinum,* London, 1639; Adam Littleton, *Linguae Latinae Liber Dictionarius Quadripartitus,* London, 1678, 1703; Elisha Coles, *A Dictionary, English-Latin, and Latin-English,* London, 1736.

generations, and lexicographers had to render the term into some appropriate English form. What, then, was that English form? The standard Spanish dictionary of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the Percivale-Minsheu *Dictionarie in Spanish and English* of 1599 and 1623, is eloquently brief: *Farça* or *Farsa* means "a play, an enterlude"; the plural form seems to mean a little more: "playes, enterludes, comedies or tragedies acted." The Italian equivalents are given in Florio's *World of Words* of 1598 and 1611, revised in 1659 by Giovanni Torriano. Florio's loose definition of Italian *farsa (farza)* as "a merry tale, a pleasant discourse[,] Also an enterlude or stage play" is expanded by a slight but significant phrase by Torriano on the eve of the Restoration. "A merry tale," etc., may also mean "a lame Comedy." The French dictionaries[34] tell much of the same story: the terms *farce, farcer, farceur,* etc., are rendered as "play or enterlude," "to mock, deride," "a maker of Plays, a deviser of ieasts," etc. The standard French-English dictionary by Randle Cotgrave goes beyond all these definitions. Even in the first edition of 1611, *farce* is defined as "a (fond and dissolute) Play, Comedie, or Enterlude; also, the Jyg at the end of an Enterlude, wherein some prete knaverie is acted. . . ." In the English-French dictionary by Robert Sherwood, which was added to Cotgrave's work in 1632, the word *farce* nowhere appears. Such an omission is, of course, easy to understand; what is difficult to explain, on the other hand, is that in the issues of this double work after the Restoration the gap was not filled. A satisfactory explanation would seem to be that the later editions were mere reprints, not revisions.

With the account of the purely English dictionaries[35] the story may be brought to a close. In the works which pre-

---

[34]I have been able to use only the Cotgrave dictionary, in these editions: 1611, 1632, 1650, 1673.

[35]The few polyglot dictionaries which I have consulted—Baret's *Alvearie,* 1573 and 1580, Minsheu's *Guide into the Tongues,* 1617,

ceded 1660, the dictionaries of Cockeram, Blount, and Phillips, *farce* received short shrift indeed: "stuffed, full" was the laconic definition of Cockeram in 1650, a definition which was echoed in Blount's first *Glossographia* of 1656, and in Phillips' *New World of English Words* two years later. Cockeram's definition remained the same in subsequent editions, as did Phillips' until eighteen years after the Restoration. In Blount, however, we have a man whose ear was peculiarly receptive to neologisms, as has been pointed out elsewhere.[36] When *Glossographia* appeared in a second edition in the year following Charles's return from France the vocabulary was expanded enough to permit a new term to enter. Besides the venerable usage reserved to the kitchen comes the new one: "a fond and dissolute Play, or Comedy; also the Jig at the end of an Interlude, wherein some pretty Knavery is acted. . . ." Perhaps new is not the right term, as a glance at the early edition of Cotgrave's French dictionary will reveal the source of Blount's definition. Whaever his source, it is evident that the compiler of *Glossographia* was alert enough to catch a new form which in the space of a year or two had caught hold and which in a few more years was to be employed freely in the English theatre.

---

and Howell's *Lexicon Tetraglotton*, 1660—give much the same account as the bilingual works and, as might be supposed, in briefer form. Where Spanish, French, or Italian calls for some form of *farcire*, the English equivalent is *enterlude, jest*, etc.

[36]D. T. Starnes, "English Dictionaries of the Seventeenth Century," *University of Texas Studies in English*, XVII (July, 1937), 33 ff.

JEREMY TAYLOR'S CRITICISM OF ABSTRACT SPECULATION

By T. G. Steffan

Jeremy Taylor was not an original thinker, but in many ways he was representative of the thought of his age and at all times acutely responsive to the pressures of a troubled England. He did very seriously represent his party and labor for the Anglican cause. Taylor's various tracts attest to his life-long service for Anglicanism in opposition both to the dissenting sects and to Catholicism.[1] Throughout this life-long defense of episcopacy, Taylor was more or less conventionally, if learnedly, giving his energies to theological and ecclesiastical disputes, doing his duty as he saw it. But there was an undercurrent of weariness with such controversy that came more prominently to the surface as he grew older, acted as a stimulus for the writing of his greater ethical books, and at the same time showed that one so thoroughly a Caroline divine as Taylor was shifting with the currents of thought of his time, away from an age that was intense about its religion to another that was more interested in order and a world sensibly settled.

There does not, however, seem to be any sudden shift in his views. Perhaps the misfortunes of the civil war may have made words about the exact nature of the real presence, or about the apostolic succession, or about the necessity of a liturgy, seem less vital at the moment than what the civil war was actually doing to his people and particularly to their moral character. Not that Jeremy Taylor ever suggests that he thought such theological and ecclesiastical questions insignificant, or that he would

---

[1] *Clerus Domini, a Discourse of the Divine Institution of the Office Ministerial; Episcopacy Asserted; An Apology for Authorized and Set Forms of Liturgy; Unum Necessarium; Real Presence and Spiritual of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament; Deus justificatus; A Dissuasive from Popery.*

abandon important episcopal doctrines or Stuart prerogative for the sake of national peace. He does, however, often seem to *feel* that the immediate needs of everyday living make more intimate demands on the church than do theoretical disputes. That Taylor's mind was less genuinely philosophical than sensitive to concrete experience may largely account for his failure to see that England could not have daily peace until the great political and religious issues were settled forcibly one way or the other. Taylor, emotionally alert to experience, saw the effects of the struggle, and thought rather that common goodness, gentleness, Christian morality, earnestly practised by the individual, would dissolve national strife. Let each man set his house in order and then the world would naturally settle itself peaceably. This naïve ideal, the song of many a pastor before and after Taylor, this hope that Christian living among individuals would bring peace to the world at large, was, as we shall see, certainly a positive motive for the writing of his Golden Grove sermons and of his devotional works, *The Great Exemplar, Holy Living and Holy Dying,* and *The Worthy Communicant.*

Another fundamental motive behind these works and involved with his positive ethical aim was the vigorous negative one already mentioned, an impatience with metaphysics in general, and in particular with the whole tempest of doctrinal controversy that was exhausting the religious energies of the period, energies squandered on theology and ecclesiasticism, and drawn away from the primary offices of religion. Taylor's position here was broadly humanistic, firmly anti-intellectual. A brief anthology of these humanistic passages containing all that Taylor said about abstract speculation would reveal little development in the main ideas, but a review of a few characteristic paragraphs will indicate the variation in his applications: (a) his sense of the barrenness of theoretical effort; (b) his contempt for the kind of theological subjects investigated by scholars; (c) his opposition

to speculation on those fundamentals reserved for faith alone—a point consistent with the main grounds of his argument for toleration; (d) his distress over the disorder caused by controversy and the moral injury done to the people by squabbling preachers—and then the general lines of positive suggestion that Taylor had to make—(e) his recommendation that man turn his inquisitive energies to the unknowns of physical science; (f) his frequent exhortation that, since man's main duty in his ordinary dealings with other men is plain and indisputable, preachers and parishioners were to focus on the problems of ethics, the conduct of "holy living."

The scholastic tribe (of which Taylor of course was often one) drew his scorn because they were so completely detached from the world of reality, because they wasted talent and high tempers on barren material that could produce nothing for flesh-and-blood living. There had been a great digging in the sand and no profit.

> Too many scholars have lived upon air and empty notions for many ages past, and troubled themselves with tying and untying knots like hypochondriacs in a fit of melancholy, thinking of nothing, and troubling themselves with nothing, and falling out about nothings, and being very wise and very learned in things that are not and work not, and were never planted in paradise by the finger of God. Men's notions are too often like mules, begotten by equivocal and unnatural generations; but they make no species: they are begotten, but they can beget nothing; they are the effects of long study, but they can do not good when produced.[2]
>
> So it is in the books and expositions of many men; they study, they argue, they expound, they reprove, they open secrets, and make new discoveries; and when you turn the bottom upwards, up starts nothing; no man is wiser, no man is instructed, no truth discovered, no proposition cleared, nothing is altered but much labour and much time is lost. And this is manifest in nothing more than in books of controversy, and in mystical expositions of scripture.[3]

---

[2]Jeremy Taylor, *A Supplement to the Course of Sermons for the Whole Year*, Sermon 6, in *The Whole Works*, ed. by R. Heber and revised by C. P. Eden (London, 1847–50), VIII, 384.

[3]Taylor, *Supplement*, Sermon 11, 526–7.

Many of these scholars were sterile because they grubbed among silly matters of no practical consequence.

But what are you the better if any man should pretend to teach you whether every angel makes a species, and what is the individuation of the soul in the state of separation? What are you the wiser if you should study and find out what place Adam should forever have lived in if he had not fallen? and what is any man the more learned if he hears the disputes, whether Adam should have multiplied children in the state of innocence, and what would have been the event of things if one child had been born before his father's sin?[4]

Perhaps if theologians had confined their speculation to these foolish questions, Taylor might have dismissed them as contemptible but harmless. He was more indignantly up in arms, however, when he saw reason running wild and thrashing about with doctrines that were matters of faith, and not for busy and indiscreet inquiry. No good could come from spinning about in such rational abstraction; indeed there was serious danger here to piety and true devotion. The humanistic stress on the primary duties of right living, the Erasmian distaste for speculation appears, for instance, in his protest against any philosophically ambitious probing of the Trinity.

He that goes to speak of and to understand the mysterious Trinity, and does it by words and names of man's invention, or by such which signify contingently, if he reckons this mystery by the mythology of numbers, by the *cabala* of letters, by the distinctions of the school, and by the weak inventions of disputing people; if he only talks of essences and existences, *hypostases* and personalities, distinctions without difference, and priority in co-equalities, and unity in pluralities, and of superior predicates of no larger extent than the inferiour subjects, he may amuse himself, and find his understanding will be like S. Peter's upon the mount of Tabor

---

[4]Taylor, *Supplement*, Sermon 6, VIII, 384. Taylor himself liked to speculate about the state of separation. See *The Life of Our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* in *The Whole Works*, II, 751 ff; the funeral sermons for Sir George Dalstone and the Countess of Carberry in the *Supplement; The Rule and Exercises of Holy Dying* in *The Whole Works*, III, 454–55.

at the transfiguration: he may build three tabernacles in his head, and talk something, but he knows not what.[5]

Taylor then turns from the scholar to "the good man" and to *his* emotional acceptance of the mystery of the Trinity. Curiously we now have an Anglican speaking like the veriest Independent, relying on the instincts, the inner light of the individual heart, so earnest is Taylor's distrust of the metaphysical road to truth.

But the good man . . . "in whose heart the love of the spirit of God is spread," . . . this man, though he understands nothing of that which is unintelligible, yet he only understands the mysteriousness of the Holy Trinity . . . this man best understands the secret and undiscernible economy, he *feels* this unintelligible mystery, and sees with his heart what his tongue can never express, and his metaphysics can never prove. In these cases faith and love are the best knowledge, . . . and therefore whatever thing is spoken of God metaphysically, there is no knowing of God theologically, and as He ought to be known, but by the measures of holiness, and the proper light of the Spirit of God.[6]

Taylor believes that it is by emotional and imaginative apprehension of the Trinity, and indeed of all religious truth, not by any metaphysical demonstration of it, that man receives the greatest practical good for himself in this world. Incidentally we are at the very heart of Taylor's conception of simple faith, and more significantly we are again aware of the method of Taylor's thought, the quick, direct grasp of his imagination at religious truth, not the deliberate metaphysical approach. He thus saw such truth more often in the common religious experiences of actual living than in the intellectual analysis of doctrine.

Another specific instance will illustrate the general lines of his contention even more strongly. As in man's attitude toward the doctrine of the Trinity, so in the all-important mysteries of the eucharist, Taylor will pass quickly over the speculative truth of the sacrament and

[5]Sermon 6 in the *Supplement*, VIII, 387.
[6]*Ibid.*, p. 384.

go straight to the practical benefit man can derive for his daily living from a devout participation in that sacrament. He sees the eucharist

> too much untwisted and nicely handled by the writings of the doctors; and by them made more mysterious, and like a doctrine of philosophy made intricate by explications, and difficult by the aperture and dissolutions of distinctions.[7]

Why wrestle with secrets that cannot promote the "ends of a holy life?" More actively pernicious however is *controversy* over such secrets. Doctrinal speculation for its own sake is barren enough, but when men get embroiled in disputes over the "nicety of the manner of Christ's presence" in the sacrament, then Christianity is made no religion at all, but "labyrinths and wild turnings of questions and uncertain talkings."[8] He begs men to think of the primary aims of Christianity, and then measure the value of such disputing.[9] In that light, all religious contention is seen to be contrary to the principles of religion itself. A theological controversialist, if he be honest, must face one inevitable question. If he answers it according to the plain rules of Christ, he will bring to an end all controversy:

> What have your people to do whether Christ's body be in the sacrament by consubstantiation, or transubstantiation; whether purgatory be in the center of the earth, or in the air, or anywhere,

---

[7] *Worthy Communicant*, in *The Whole Works*, VIII, 8.

[8] Jeremy Taylor, *The Rule and Exercise of Holy Living* in *The Whole Works*, III, 218, 3.

[9] Closely related to these points are some of Taylor's most liberal arguments for toleration. He revealed again in the *Liberty of Prophesying* his distress over the schisms and quarrels that beset Christendom, and sought a reasonable remedy in a broad freedom for individual interpretation of many details of doctrine and practice. He maintained, however, that the articles of the Apostles' Creed must be accepted as a universal basis of common belief, since about these articles there could be no possible disagreement among true Christians. Analysis of these basic articles and controversy about them would be wasteful and mischievous.

or nowhere? and who but a mad man would trouble their heads with the entangled links of the fanatic chain of predestination?[10]

Not only is such speculative controversy contrary to the spirit of religion, but it has likewise the practical disadvantage of being endless and futile, of settling nothing and convincing no one. Taylor himself had frequently turned his hand to controversy, and although he had conducted most of his arguments with charity and mild restraint, he had soon become deeply discouraged by the uselessness of this battle of words. As early as 1649 he was complaining that he was "weary and toiled with rowing up and down in the seas of questions."

Men dispute forever; and either the question is indeterminable, or, which is worse, men will never be convinced. For such is the nature of disputings, that they begin commonly in mistakes, they proceed with zeal and fancy, and end not at all but in schisms and uncharitable names, and too often dip their feet in blood. In the meantime, he that gets the better of his adversary oftentimes gets no good to himself"[11]

Taylor thus questions the value of theological controversy because its activity violated the ethical principles of Christianity and because it was useless and disorderly. A third charge against speculative controversy derives from a characteristically humanistic ideal, insistently ethical, and withal it is the most damaging attack. If the clergy and the leaders of the people haggle over theological doctrines, each faction hanging onto its own peculiar view with stubborn blindness, then they do the common people a great moral injury. They encourage them to be intolerant and opinionated, teach them never "to suspect their own judgment," and in many ways foster in them bad mental habits. Against all such bad discipline of

---

[10]Sermon 11 in the *Supplement*, VIII, 532. It must be remembered that some of these objections, especially the most vigorous ones, were written in exasperation at the Presbyterians of his Irish diocese, who gave him no peace with their wrangling.

[11]*Life of Christ*, II, 2–3.

mind and heart, Taylor's reason revolts, simply because he looks at experience and sees the disturbing fruits of controversy all around him. If the clergy are forever quarreling over insignificant externals of ritual, then they destroy all sense of proportion in the minds of folk less learned than they, and obscure the really important ideals and duties of the Christian religion. Moreover, they teach them to balk at trivialities, to carp at any detail that does not please their whim, and thus a fractious clergy will excite the unreflecting masses to all degrees of disobedience. His plea springs from an outraged common sense and from an emotional distress, as much as from a desire to keep the Anglican order intact.

> Is it not a shame that people should be filled with sermons against ceremonies, and declamations against a surplice, and tedious harangues against the poor and airy sign of the cross in baptism? These things teach them to be ignorant; it fills them with wind; . . . it makes them lazy and useless, troublesome and good for nothing. Can the definition of a Christian be, that a Christian is a man that rails against bishops and the common prayer book? and yet this is the great labour of our neighbors that are crept in among us; this they call the work of the Lord; . . . preachings all day for shadows and moonshine, . . . not a word shall come from them to teach the people humility, not a word of obedience or self-denial; they are never taught to suspect their own judgment.[12]

If Taylor the humanist was opposed to an over-intellectualized theology and to zealously embittered controversy, Taylor, again as a man of the Renaissance, suggests one kind of endeavor that might absorb some of the energies dissipated by controversy. He recommends the study of physical phenomena as a means of diverting man's attention from ecclesiastical dispute. This recognition of the possibilities of scientific study seems to be unique in Taylor's many pages, and he makes no more of it. Still he is reflecting, ever so faintly, one current of thought in the seventeenth century, the advance of Wilkins, Boyle, and

---

[12]Sermon 11 in the *Supplement*, VIII, 532.

others who were also restless under the futility of theological speculation and who sought to direct their efforts to more useful investigation and who came to form the Royal Society.[13]

> But if great things will satisfy our inquiry, the course of the sun and moon, the spots in their faces, the firmament of heaven, and the supposed orbs, the ebbing and flowing of the sea, are work enough for us: or if this be not, let him tell me whether the number of the stars be even or odd, and when they began to be so; since some ages have discovered new stars which the former knew not, but might have seen if they had been where now they are fixed. If these be troublesome, search lower, and tell me why this turf this year brings forth a daisy, and the next year a plaintain; why the apple bears his seed in his heart, and wheat bears it in his head: let him tell why a graft taking nourishment from a crabstock shall have a fruit more noble than its nurse and parent: let him say why the best of oil is at the top, the best of wine in the middle, and the best of honey at the bottom, otherwise than it is in some liquors that are thin and in some that are thicker.[14]

Obviously Taylor is not here speaking as a man genuinely interested in natural science. He has no sense of the far-reaching values of scientific study, nor of any pressing need for it. The whole tone and approach are those of one who is marveling at the design or the variety of the physical universe which he does not understand intellectually. Nor is there any real desire here, or elswhere in Taylor, so to understand them. He is content to watch and wonder. Indeed, about the only use he makes of his sensitivity to the "wonders" of the physical world is an

---

[13]Bishop Sprat, in his account of the early meetings of that group of men at Oxford who were interested in scientific study, voices sentiments similar to those of Taylor. He tells us how his "unimpassioned company," in the "gloomy season" of the civil war and the protectorate, found natural science the fittest subject "to pitch upon." For "to have been always tossing about some theological question, would have been, to have made that their private diversion, the excess of which they themselves dislik'd in the public." Thomas Sprat, *The History of The Royal Society of London, For the Improving of Natural Knowledge* (London, 1734), pp. 55–6.

[14]*Holy Living*, III, 80.

imaginative use, in his famous similes from nature (and many of those seem to be from bookish sources), to give concreteness to his abstract ideas, and the suggestiveness and music that are in such poetic expression. Taylor's attitude toward theology was never that of the intellectualist, or the metaphysician; nor could his attitude toward the physical universe be that of the intellectualist, the man of science. In both spheres, Taylor was alternately the man of imagination, and the man of common-sense. But significantly, in his reaction against the troubled feuds that grew out of the Reformation, he turns to that interest which the Renaissance gave to the present physical world.[15]

A second kind of endeavor which Taylor recommended to combat the evils of speculative controversy was in effect the main object of his best writing, the object one might expect from a humanistic moralist. The one exhortation, many times repeated, was almost too simple: let man study to achieve "holiness" of living. This aim is easy, he insisted, it is within man's reach; it is the great aim of Christianity, mainly because the rules of holy conduct are so plain that they offer no chance for minute refinement or bickering.

> Christian religion loves not tricks or artifices of wonder, but like the natural and amiable simplicity of Jesus, by plain and easy propositions leads us in wise paths to a place where sin and strife shall never enter.[16]

The task of the average man is therefore clear. What business has a man in private life to meddle with the

---

[15]It is a temptation to make too much of an isolated passage. On the other hand, Taylor's frequent use of what might be called empiric methods of argument, his evaluation of doctrines in terms of sensory experience, his appeals to actual daily experience, are other indications that he may have absorbed some of the scientific temper of the age in his controversial work. It is however beyond the limits of this paper to survey such evidence in his theological writings.

[16]Sermon 11 in the *Supplement*, VIII, 532.

problems of government in church and state, or in abstruse matters of theology? Let him not pry into things not properly his concern. Let him look to himself and the duties of his own employment. The practical concern with daily living seems to comprise two feelings, a dislike of all disorder to which religious wrangling had contributed its share, and a a conservative anxiety about the established order of a Stuart-Laudian world.

> Enquire not into the secrets of God; but be content to learn thy duty according to the quality of thy person or employment. . . . God's commandments were proclaimed to all the world; but God's counsels are to Himself and to His secret ones when they are admitted within the veil. Enquire not into things which are too hard for thee, but learn modestly to know thy infirmities and abilities; and raise not thy mind up to inquire into mysteries of state, or the secrets of government, or difficulties theological, if thy employment really be, or thy understanding be judged to be, of a lower rank.[17]

The task of the preacher is equally clear; not to declaim on theological obscurities, not to row "up and down in the seas of questions," and spew the venom of factiousness, not to exercise the people in "holy doctrine," but to teach and direct them and encourage them lovingly in "holy living," and all that meant for the individual in a Stuart world:

> Teach them to fear God and honor the King, to keep the commandments of God and the king's commands because of the oath of God; learn them to be sober and temperate, to be just and to pay their debts, to speak well of their neighbor and to think meanly of themselves; teach them charity, and learn them to be zealous of good works.[18]

There is not in this round of advice Taylor's more eloquent rhetoric, but plain common sense, earnest in its confidence in the power of ordinary rightness in common living. It is prudential wisdom that anticipates the ideals of settled living cherished by generations to come. Though

---

[17]*Holy Living*, III, 79.

[18]Sermon 11 in the *Supplement*, VIII, 532.

Taylor long continued to discourse learnedly in justification of episcopacy and its doctrines, we see that those labors seemed again and again to him to belong to a remote official world, one too distraught with angry, futile words and hard feelings, and so he came down to that common sensible work that lay closer to his main interests, the ethical guidance of man among his fellows. Polemics and theory had seemed necessary, but he was weary of abstractions and of battles and found little immediate good in them. Taylor, partly from his distress over the disturbed conditions of his time, and partly from personal temperament and humanistic sympathies, often thinks in terms of the Restoration concept of a settled world. In all that he has to say about abstract speculation and controversy, he is primarily a man of practical, common reason. Thus if we see Taylor in his views about the relative values of theology and ethics, less an Anglican tractarian than a humanist, a man *turning* from an appeal to metaphysical reason and sound doctrine *to* an earnest trust in practical reason and "the good life," if we see him so, then we can project the three devotional works against their thoughtful and emotional background; and it seems natural and inevitable that Jeremy Taylor, Anglican divine, came to write them. The prefaces to these three works all point to the one central conviction: "Theology is rather a divine life than a divine knowledge."

> God was therefore desirous that human nature should be perfected with moral not intellectual excellencies. . . . A man hath great use and need of justice, and all the instances of morality serve his natural and political ends; he cannot live without them, and be happy. But the filling the rooms of the understanding with airy and ineffective notions is just such an excellency as it is in a man to imitate the voice of birds; at his very best the nightingale shall excell him, and it is no use to that end which God designed him in the first intentions of creation. In pursuance of this consideration, I have chosen to serve the purposes of religion by doing assistance to that part of theology which is wholly practical; that which makes us wiser therefore because it makes us better.[19]

[19] *Life of Christ*, II, 2.

My work here is not to please the speculative part of men, but to minister to practise, to preach to the weary, comfort the sick etc.[20]

My purpose is not to dispute, but to persuade, not to confute anyone, but to instruct those that need; not to make a noise, but to excite devotion; not to enter into curious but material enquiries. . . . The natural order of theology is by faith to build up good life, by a rectified understanding to regulate the will and the affections.[21]

---

[20]*Holy Dying*, III, 264.

[21]*Worthy Communicant*, VIII, 9–10.

THE UNCONVENTIONAL HEROIC PLAYS OF NATHANIEL LEE

By Frances Barbour

It is common knowledge that the heroic drama of the Restoration was a vehicle for propagating the theory of the divine right of kings. William Davenant, who was instrumental in the reopening of the theatres in 1660, continued in the policy of currying favor with the ruling powers by a glorification of the theory of divine right. The great Dryden followed his example, and divine right became a favorite theme of the dramatic poets. That the heroic drama prior to 1679 became also the vehicle for the political doctrine of the opposition, has not been suggested. Nathaniel Lee, however, probably the most popular dramatist of the period next to Dryden, wrote no less than ten heroic plays, five of them before 1679, which pictured kings as tyrants and posed the theory that the acts of kings are open to criticism.

The emphatic monarchism of the drama from 1660 to 1679 was due, no doubt, to a rigid censorship and to the dependence of dramatists upon the good will of the Court. Certainly the Puritans had shown them no hospitality. Then the Popish Plot in 1678 created an issue upon which the Court was divided, and the failure of Charles for almost two years to show his hand in regard to the religious issues made it possible for dramatists to treat freely either side of the question. An era of lively political and religious controversy in the playhouses resulted. Lee's part in this controversy has been adequately treated by Mr. R. G. Ham in his study of Otway and Lee.[1] But, that the five plays written by Lee prior to 1679 are of a political complexion consistent with these later plays, and not at all in accord with the political conventions of the heroic play, has not hitherto been shown. The fact is that Lee

[1] *Otway and Lee*, New Haven, Yale University Press. 1931.

never subscribed to the doctrine of divine right, and that he was consistently critical of that doctrine.

It would, indeed, be strange if Lee's plays did not lack the modish royalist flavor, for Lee was congenitally of the Commonwealth party. His father had been the Chaplain of General Monk, and, though in 1663 the elder Lee had publicly recanted his Puritan connections, such recantations were both politic and common, and it seems evident that there had been bred into the young poet a belief that kings are accountable for their acts. Ten of his thirteen plays either propound a revolutionary political doctrine or attack Catholicism and its influence on the state. Lack of such doctrines in his remaining three plays is easily accounted for.

The first five[2] of his plays, which appeared in the years 1674–8, furnish in no sense the accepted "pattern of love and honour," but are consistent in their unfavorable portrayal of kinship. *Nero* (1674), the maiden effort of the young poet, must have seemed brashly unconventional, for he found it necessary to request in the epistle dedicatory to the Earl of Rochester,

> Protection in the behalf of a civil tyrant, at least for one whom I have so represented, and for which I have been sufficiently censured, perhaps unjustly enough; since 'tis not impossible for a man to . . . be brave and bad.

And here we find the character of Lee's ruler—"brave and bad." True, the hero is a great military figure, but he is turned from his heroic pursuits by a passion unworthy of him; for he loves so intensely as to be unfitted for his heroic function (Hannibal in *Sophonisba*), or he does not wisely confine his passion to one object (Alexander in *Rival Queens*), or he is ruled by a passion inappropriate to his advanced years (Augustus, in *Gloriana* and Mithradates, in the play by that name). This last situation, which was a favorite with Lee, involves the aged hero in

---

[2]*Nero, Gloriana, Sophonisba, The Rival Queens, Mithradates.*

an abnormal rivalry with a more admirable son and renders the hero even less appealing. One gets the impression that Lee was half in love with Alexander, the most acceptable hero in this group of plays; yet even Alexander is guilty of unwise favoritism and cruel and passionate action, and is subjected to much criticism by the wisest characters in *The Rival Queens.*

It is evident, too, that from the beginning certain questions of political theory were teasing Lee. The continual recurrence of criticism of a ruler by wise or admirable characters and the frequent discussion of political questions are far more insistent than is dramatically appropriate. It is possible that Lee accepted hereditary kinship as an institution, but from the unnecessarily emphatic treatment of the question of legitimacy in *Gloriana,* it would seem that Lee did not consider legitimacy essential and that he preferred a virtuous illegitimate ruler to a legitimate tyrant. It is argued by Augustus that, Caesario being illegitimate, the legitimately-adopted Augustus had rightly inherited the empire. More convincing is the case for Caesario, which is based on Caesario's virtue and natural gifts. *Gloriana* appeared in January 1675/6, two years before the Popish Plot, out of which grew the movement to exclude from the succession James, the Duke of York, in favor of Monmouth, the illegitimate son of Charles. The emphasis upon this question in *Gloriana* tempts one to surmise that as early as 1676 Protestant Monmouth may have been in the minds of traditional Commonwealth men as the more desirable heir to the throne. In *The Rival Queens* is found another treatment of the question of the basis for choosing a ruler. When Lysimachus, the heir of Alexander, asks the dying emperor to whom he bequeaths the "empire of the world," Alexander replies, "To him who is most worthy."[3] In no play does Lee propose heredity as the just basis for sovereignty.

---

[3]*The Rival Queens,* V, ii, 268.

According to Lee virtue does not necessarily dwell in an anointed king, and kings are accountable for their acts. In all five of these early plays the evil or unwise acts of rulers are subject to criticism by characters with whom the reader sympathizes. In *Gloriana* Araspes states that,

> Though Caesar from Heav'n's partial hand receive
> Immediate power, small vertue did she give,[4]

and Caesario wonders at a

> Heaven that can see such Vertue in distress
> And with exceeding power a Tyrant bless;
> . . . . . .
> Heav'n that allows this parracide a name
> As great and good as the first sons of Fame.[5]

And there is much of the same sort of criticism of kings in Lee's other plays. Even Alexander is subjected to accusations by his beloved counselor, Clytus:

> Forgive yourself for all your blasphemies,
> The riot of a most debauched and blotted life.[6]

Obviously Lee did not subscribe to the legal concept that a king can do no wrong; in fact, he believed that a king has a duty to his office. Alexander's dying utterance is a regret that he has not discharged "the duty of a man to empire born."[7] Not only do kings have responsibilities; not only are they subject to criticism; but, as Lee occasionally suggested, people might be justified in ridding themselves of a tyrannical ruler. In *Nero* Drusillus asserts that

> Some noble Roman should
> Dare to be glorious, dangerously good
> And kill this tyrant,[8]

---

[4]*Gloriana*, or *The Court of Augustus Caesar*. By Nat. Lee. London. Printed for J. Magnes and R. Bentley. MDCLXXVI. III, 1, p. 22. (First edition.)

[5]*Ibid.*, IV, p. 37.

[6]*The Rival Queens*, IV, ii, 469–470.

[7]*Ibid.*, V, ii, 374.

[8]*The Tragedy of Nero Emperor of Rome*, II, i, 17–19.

and in *Gloriana,* Leander makes the same proposal in regard to Augustus—that some one should "the crown'd brute with full stroke destroy."[9]

It is true that certain fulsome expressions of loyalty to rulers occur in the plays of Lee. Such expressions, however, are likely to be coupled with a warning to the king to be worthy of such loyalty. Typical of this is the following passage from *Nero,* in which Britannicus apologizes for defending himself with his sword against his king:

> Sir what I did was in my own defence.
> When'er I rise against that sacred head
> In thought, may loads of thunder strike me dead.
> You are my master, and Rome's Emperour;
> May you live long, and make right use of power.[10]

The final clause here is significant. On the whole it seems as if Lee liked the sound of lofty expressions of loyalty and the current phrases relative to divine right, but that, confronted with misdemeanors of a ruler, he would hold the ruler accountable, and in extreme cases would counsel measures of deliverance.

Thus, these five early plays of Nathaniel Lee furnish the missing half of the picture presented by the five plays of 1679–80, which Mr. Ham has shown to be political plays written as propaganda against the religious and political policies developed by Charles during the two years following the Popish Plot. *Caesar Borgia* (1679), *The Massacre of Paris* (ca. 1679–80), and *The Princess of Cleve* (1680) are anti-Catholic plays, *Caesar Borgia* and *The Massacre* violently so. *The Massacre* was refused license for production, and it is surprising that *Caesar Borgia* was not banned. *The Princess,* according to the epistle dedicatory[11] written in 1689 when the play was first

---

[9]*Gloriana,* III, i, p. 23.

[10]*Nero,* I, i, 106–10.

[11]"This play, when it was acted, in the character of the Princess of Jainville, had a resemblance of Marguerite in the Massacre of Paris. . . . What was borrowed in the Action is left out in the Print

printed, was based partly on materials taken from *The Massacre* and "was a revenge for the Refusal of the other." Mr. Ham considers that even this play was much diluted before its presentation. The political plays, *Theodosius* (1680) and *Lucius Junius Brutus* (1680), show the same daring spirit. Material dramatically fortuitous in *Theodosius* attacks a king lax in affairs of state because of time spent with a frivolous and licentious court and with women prone to give erroneous counsel. A satisfactory solution to the problem is prescribed in the abdication of the emperor in favor of one of his generals, who is more efficient. *Lucius Junius Brutus,* banned after the third day, is even more obviously a political homily. It attacks a licentious court, a conniving priesthood, and a "pretty player" of a king who does nothing to medicine the state. The solution presented here is deposition of the king by a republican faction and the reinstatement of a representative senate. The expulsion of the Tarquin rulers "without danger to their persons, though not with reproach,"[12] seems prophetic of the events of 1689.

These five plays pose the same theories as the early plays—theories diametrically opposed to divine right. A monarch is responsible for an honest and efficient government, and a people has the right to rid itself of a ruler who does not furnish such an administration. These plays represent not a change with the changing mode but an evolution in Lee's political philosophy: they furnish constructive solutions to problems raised in the earlier plays.

The plays under consideration include ten of the thirteen plays in which Lee had a hand. He wrote one other play, *Constantine the Great* (ca. 1682–3); he also collaborated with Dryden in two plays, *Oedipus* (1679) and *The Duke of Guise* (1682). The fact that these plays do not

---

and quite obliterated in the minds of Men! . . . I was I confess through indignation, forced to limb my own Child, which time . . . has set together again . . ."

[12]*Lucius Junius Brutus.* Bell's British Theatre, vol. 31. London. George Cawthorne, British Library, Strand. 1797. II, p. 40.

fit into the philosophical pattern outlined above may be easily explained. In *Oedipus,* which is in no respect a thesis play, Lee was merely doing certain scenes assigned to him by the elder and greater poet. In such a work the young protégé would hardly obtrude his political ideas. The *Duke of Guise* represents a similar situation, except that this is a thesis play. It defends a monarch, absolute by divine right, in an attack upon the forces of radical protestantism—a dual thesis naturally uncongenial to Lee. Evidently Lee's contemporaries of his own political complexion appreciated Lee's position as collaborator, for, instead of attacking Lee's apostasy, they charged Dryden with leading Lee astray. Dryden, according to Shadwell and Hunt,[18] had turned to Tory ends Lee's previously written *Massacre of Paris.*

Whether the desertion of the Whig cause by Lee was due to Dryden's influence or to his own realization that a playwright would do well to be prudent in his political utterance, *Constantine the Great,* written in the same year as *The Duke of Guise,* glorifies the theory of divine right. It is possible that Lee was conscious that his powers were failing, and was striving frantically to get his plays before the public even at a sacrifice of his political principles. At any rate, *Constantine* is full of evidence that his powers were declining, and Lee was confined in Bedlam in September, 1684. It is the single play by Nathaniel Lee which follows the political convention of the heroic play. Ten of Lee's eleven plays propound the political theories which have their roots in the Commonwealth and which came to their fruition after the Glorious Revolution.

The final chapter in Lee's career furnishes additional evidence that the Commonwealth-Whig Lee is the real Nathaniel Lee. He wrote no more plays, but he published in 1689 *The Princess of Cleve,* which had not yet appeared in print, and in 1690 the previously forbidden *Massacre*

---

[18]*Some Reflection upon the Pretended Parallel in the Play Called The Duke of Guise* (1683).

of Paris. In the prologue and epilogue of *The Massacre* he showed the same interest in the freedom of a people from domination by an absolute monarch as he had throughout his career, and his lines here carry the same conviction. It may be argued, of course, that here was simply another turn of the political coat. No one who is thoroughly acquainted with Lee's work, however, will make this charge. The two plays of 1682 merely constitute a negligible interlude, and the ten plays written between 1674 and 1680 present the political philosophy of Nathaniel Lee.

Nathaniel Lee is consistently anti-divine-right and anti-Tory. Even at the time when the heroic play was the accepted vehicle for the glorification and popularization of divine right, he dared to portray the dangers of such a political doctrine. The impulse was, perhaps, instinctive rather than conscious, but at any rate it led to the production of plays which did not entirely conform to the pattern of the heroic play.

THE DATE OF THE FIRST COPYRIGHT LAW

By Harry Ransom

Among numerous points of confusion in the history of literary property, one of the more important is the common misdating of the first copyright statute. Most reference works, both literary and legal, give the date of passage as 1709.[1] The act itself sets the beginning of its term of operation at April 10, 1710. To accept 1709 as the date of its passage is therefore to assume a long gap in which the act was inoperative. This gap did not exist. As will be seen in the following review, the law was introduced, revised, passed, and put into operation early in 1710. The error in dating has probably occurred because the journals of Parliament are dated *1709* until late in March, 1710—a practice almost universal in dating business and legal documents at that time.

In 1698 attempts to reëstablish a licensing act failed. The Stationers' Company, having long since ceased to be the special instrument of the Crown, had lost faith in independent measures for regulating book publication. The beginning of the daily newspaper and the awakening of a new learned and popular literature made the demand for legal protection of literary property more and more insistent. In 1703, 1704, and 1706–7 petitions to Parliament recited the old griefs of booksellers or "owners of copies," and added pertinently enough that common-law actions would profit nothing except to provide the dubious

---

[1]See, for example, *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, ed. Sir Paul Harvey, Second Edition (New York, 1937), p. 877; *Copinger on the Law of Copyright*, ed. F. E. Skone James, Seventh Edition (London, 1936, p. 9); and *Annals of English Literature* (Oxford, 1936), p. 97. Until the passage of the Act of Anne, literary property was controlled, not always effectively, by regulations of the Stationers' Company, decrees of Star Chamber, and the terms of the Licensing Acts.

satisfaction of seeing the malefactor, who was often without visible assets and therefore calmly indifferent to fines, lodged in jail. From that vantage point he could continue to direct his piracies with impunity.

On Wednesday, February 26, 1706/7, a petition of booksellers, including Samuel Roycroft, Jacob Tonson, and Benjamin Took[e], was presented to Parliament.[2] Its burden was that

> many learned Men have spent much Time and been at Great Charges, in composing Books, who used to dispose of their Copies upon valuable Considerations, to be printed by the Purchasers, or have reserved some Part, for the Benefit of themselves, and Families; and the Purchasers also have, by such their Property, made Provisions for their Widows, or Children; but of late Years such Properties have been much invaded, by other Persons printing the same Books, either here in England or beyond the Seas, and importing them hither, to the great Discouragement of Persons from writing Matters, that might be of great Use to the Publick, and to the great Damage of the Proprietors.

Leave was asked to bring in a bill "for the securing Property in such Books, as have been, or shall be, purchased from or reserved to, the Authors thereof" at once.[3] It was so ordered. The first member of the Parliamentary committee to draw up a bill was Spencer Compton, who was to play a large part in the creation of the later act.

On February 28, Richard Topham presented the bill to the House. It was then read, and a second reading appointed. When this reading took place the following week, the bill was committed to thirty-one members of the House and "all the Gentlemen of the Long Robe."[4] On the same day it was ordered that the committee be empowered to include a clause to enforce the law of King Charles II relative to the deposit of copies. The following day the Library of Syon College was added to the list which already included her Majesty's Library, the Cottonian Library, and

---

[2] *Petition of the Booksellers of London* (London, 1709).

[3] *Journals of the House of Commons*, XV, 313a.

[4] *Journals, H. C.*, XV, 316b, 321a, 322b.

the libraries of the two universities. On March 18, Topham reported the bill as amended by the committee.[5] A reading was ordered for April 1; that reading, however, did not take place, and the bill was tabled.

The Stationers' Register languished. Petitions continued. On December 12, 1709, the booksellers—sixteen of them—presented a specially urgent plea to Parliament. An interesting change has taken place in their argument. In these lines self-interest is much more evident than it is in the earlier petition:

> It has been the constant Usage, for the Writers of Books to sell their Copies to Booksellers, or Printers, to the end they might hold those Copies as their Property, and enjoy the profit of making, and vending, Impressions of them; yet divers Persons have of late invaded the Properties of others, by reprinting several Books, without the Consent and to the great Injury of the Proprietors, even to their Utter Ruin, and the Discouragement of all Writers in any useful part of Learning. . . .[6]

Preliminaries over, the booksellers prayed leave to bring in a bill for "securing to them the Property of Books, bought and obtained by them." Leave was given, and Edward Wortley, Spencer Compton, and Craven Peyton were appointed to prepare the bill. The stages of preparation and passage define the issues raised on points of both public policy and special interest.

On January 11, 1710, Wortley presented the bill to the House. Its title was "A Bill for the Encouragement of Learning and for securing the Property of Copies of Books to the rightful Owners thereof."[7] The bill was received and read; a second reading was appointed. On February 9, the second reading was concluded without a change in title; the bill was then committed for a meeting one week thence of the Committee of the Whole House.[8]

---

[5] *Journals, H. C.*, XV, 346a.

[6] *Journals, H. C.*, XVI, 240a.

[7] *Journals, H. C.*, XVI, 260b, 261a.

[8] *Journals, H. C.*, XVI, 300a. On February 2, the "distressed Printers and Bookbinders, in behalf of themselves and the rest of

On February 16, the House being exceptionally busy, consideration of the copyright bill was postponed.[9] Nine days later, Compton reported the bill, with the title unchanged. Amendments had been made by the committee, and further amendments were made on the floor of the House. A new clause made penalties in cases arising in Scotland recoverable in the Court of Session. After other amendments, unspecified in the *Journal,* the House ordered that the bill be engrossed.[10] It must have been on this day that the title was changed to read "A Bill for the Encouragement of Learning by Vesting the Copies of Printed Books in the Authors or Purchasers of Such Copies." The difference between the terms *vesting* and *securing* was to become controversial.

As reported on March 14, 1710, the bill contained the further addition to the title of the concluding phrase, "during the Times therein mentioned."[11] That addition pointed to the basic terms of twenty-one and fourteen years, and was to be the source of further legal controversy. Thus constructed by the House of Commons, the bill was carried by Compton to the House of Lords, where it underwent a transformation as important as the first revision by the Commons.[12]

By March 16, when the House of Lords first considered the bill, it had become clear that the law could not go into effect on March 25, as had been planned. The first amendment was therefore to change the date of operation to April 10. Apart from numerous verbal changes the Lords made the following important amendments:

---

the same trades in and about the Cities of London and Westminster" had petitioned for redress of illegal printing. They added that without relief they—all five thousand of them—would fall into utter poverty and want. The petition was tabled, pending action on the bill. (*Journals, H. C.,* XVI, 291b.)

[9]*Journals, H. C.,* XVI, 320a.

[10]*Journals, H. C.,* XVI, 339a. See XVI, 369b.

[11]*Journals, H. C.,* XVI, 369b.

[12]*Journals, H. C.,* XVI, 394.

I. In the preamble, where the author's right had been protected in copies "not reserved to himself," the common-law right in manuscripts was stressed by changing the phrase to read "not transferred to any other."

II. The provision to curtail exorbitant prices by allowing complaint to the Archbishop of Canterbury and others was omitted. This amendment the House of Commons refused to accept, giving two reasons for their insistence upon its passage: (a) "First, because Authors and Booksellers, having the sole Property of Copies of printed Books vested in them by this Bill, the Commons think it reasonable that some Provision should be made, that they do not set an extravagant Price on useful Books." (b) "Secondly, because the Provision, made for this Purpose by the Statute 25 H. VIII Chap. 15 having been found to have been ineffectual, and not extending to that part of *Great Britain* called *Scotland*, it is necessary to make such a Provision, as may be effectual, and which may be extended to the Whole Kingdom." In conference, the Lords agreed not to insist upon their amendment, all other changes having been adopted by the Commons.

III. To the English libraries already named by the Commons as depositories, the House of Lords added the libraries of the four universities of Scotland.

IV. For the deposit of books the House of Lords made the "Proprietor, Bookseller, or Printer" responsible rather than the "Printer or Printers."

V. The House of Lords specified exemption of imported "Books in Greek, Latin, or any other foreign Language, printed beyond the Seas." This provision was, indeed, in the spirit of the "encouragement of Learning." It was designed to stop importation of pirated English books, although of course it did not do so.

VI. Perhaps the most interesting amendment by the Lords was the addition of the final proviso, which read as follows: "Provided always that, after the expiration of the said Term of Fourteen Years, the sole Right of Printing or disposing of Copies, shall return to the Authors thereof, if they are then living, for another Term of Fourteen Years." Although this clause has earned many sneers because it seems to signify the Lords' opinion that men of letters could not manage their own affairs, it is a part of a systematic attempt to further the interest of authors as distinguished from that of Booksellers.

The story of the passage of the Act of Anne in the House of Commons is paralleled in the account given in

the Journals of the House of Lords.[13] In the upper house, the bill was first read on March 24. On March 30, the bill was considered by the House acting as a Committee of the Whole. On April 3 it was referred to a special committee of sixty-nine members, with Lord Sommers acting as chairman. The amendments which I have just noticed were recommended April 4; the House desired a conference the following day. The conference was held immediately, and that day the bill was announced as one of twenty-three which were to be passed. Royal assent to these bills having been given, Her Majesty closed the Parliament "with a most gracious Speech," and the Act for the Encouragement of Learning became law, effective the following Monday, April 10.[14]

Much strife preceded the passage of this Copyright Act, and plentiful argument followed upon it. It has been seen, however, that the bill itself was not the product of long haggling. It was introduced after attempts at similar legislation had failed; but once brought to consideration, it was passed as expeditiously as possible. From January 11, 1710, until April 10, 1710, only three months elapsed. In that time the bill was introduced, amended in both houses, approved in conference, and signed by Her Majesty. On the latter date it became law. The first copyright law, then, belongs to the year 1710.

---

[13]See *Journals of the House of Lords*, XIX, 109b, 123a, 134a, 138b, 140–141a, 143a, 143b, 144a.

[14]*Journals, H. C.*, XIX, 396b.

EARLY WARBURTON? OR LATE WARBURTON?

By R. H. Griffith

What follows is the life-story in brief of a passage in Pope's *Essay on Criticism*—a short passage, eleven lines. It is a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde story; for the passage has currency in two versions, two incarnations, in a manner of speaking, which appear now the one and now the other, but not both at once in place and time.

It might reasonably have been expected that the text of a poem which is on the edge of its 230th birthday and which is and always has been popular, would long ago have been established in a oneness beyond dispute or choice.

The popularity is remarkable. Dr. Gallup's Institute has not yet polled the United States to ascertain the extent of it; but, lacking the service of that estimable sampling technique, one still may opine that the popularity is great; for upon another test, the test of quotability, the *Essay* takes high ranking in the percentage column. It contains a total of 744 lines; and from it there are in Mr. Christopher Morley's late valuable recension of Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations* twenty-seven passages, containing sixty-nine lines; that is, more than nine per cent of the whole poem has entered into—let's say—the newspaper editorial's everyday, usable speech. Of other English poems three hundred or more lines long, perchance only three *(Morleio judice), Hamlet, Macbeth,* and *The Deserted Village,* have had so large proportions of them enter the stock of standard quotations.[1]

The passage as Pope first published it in 1711 reads in this way:

---

[1]Morley's is the eleventh edition (Bartlett XI). Bartlett X (N. H. Dole, ed.) has the same figures. Other editions, other customers. Bartlett VII gives the *Essay* a percentage of 7 +, and for competitors *Hamlet, Macbeth, Paradise Lost,* Book II, *Comus,* and *Deserted Village.* Bartlett I (1855) has 10 quotes and 14 lines for the *Essay on Criticism,* and 81 and 197 for *Hamlet.*

Thus *Pegasus*, a nearer way to take,
May boldly deviate from the common Track.
Great Wits sometimes may *gloriously offend*,
And *rise* to *Faults* true Criticks *dare not mend;*
From *Vulgar Bounds* with *brave Disorder* part,
And *snatch* a *Grace* beyond the Reach of Art,
Which, without passing thro' the *Judgment*, gains
The *Heart*, and all its End *at once* attains.
In *Prospects*, thus, some *Objects* please our Eyes,
Which *out of* Nature's *common Order* rise,
The shapeless *Rock*, or hanging *Precipice.*

This, which may be called Version A, states that "Great Wits" (*i.e.*, poets) may "snatch a grace."

Version B, the Mr. Hyde in the story, the bad version, contains the same lines, but by transferring the couplet "Great Wits . . . not mend" (lines 152–53) to follow line 160, it presents a ridiculous figure of speech by asserting that it is Pegasus who may "snatch a grace."

Version A appeared in all the two dozen editions in the years 1711–1743 inclusive. It disappeared for about twenty years. Then in 1764 it came back to be the authoritative text in Warburton editions up to and including that of 1788.

Version B first appeared in a fine quarto in February, 1744, "with the commentary and notes of W. Warburton, A.M.," and was the only text to be printed in the twenty years, 1744–1763.

After 1764 both the versions appear, as the years in long line beget fresh editions and new printings. The A version had the support of all the large editions after Warburton's, done by Warton, Bowles, Nichols, Roscoe, and Elwin & Courthope; and, as "poetical works," by Dyce, Croly; and, in twentieth century America, by Boynton, Bronson, C. A. Moore, and Stith Thompson. Version B, the bad one, has been given preference by some early anthologists in the Dr. Johnson "Poets," Anderson, Chalmers; by two mid-nineteenth century editors of the "poetical works," Carruthers, and Sir Adolphus Ward; in America, by Bartlett's *Quotations*, and by some of the

most prominent twentieth century American scholars, Sherburn, Jones, Crane, and Tupper.[2]

After that array of data, the question arises, Can either Dr. Jekyll or Mr. Hyde be liquidated, rubbed out for keeps and all? The B version is a mess as a figure of speech, but it is in the books (some of them); can it be shown that Pope did not write it? Where so many famous doctors have disagreed, is it possible at this late day to arrive at or near certainty? The answer is, Yes; a paragraph concerning a six-year period of history and an examination of three pieces of evidence will do the business, will show that Version B was Warburton's brainchild, not Pope's.

In the six years after 1738 the Reverend William Warburton, A.M. (later to be a bishop), busying himself about many things, was spending much time with Pope in Twickenham. One task was the preparation and publication of the second volume of the *Divine Legation of Moses.* Another was supervision of the printing and several reprintings of his defense of the *Essay on Man* against a charge of deism, by which production he had won an extravagant admiration from Pope.[3] Another was encouraging Pope to compose a *New Dunciad* (*i.e.*, Book IV),

---

[2]Version A.—1797, Joseph Warton, 9 vols. (again 1803, 1822); 1806, W. L. Bowles, 10 vols.; 1811, Anon., 2 vols.; 1812, [J. Nichols], 8 vols.; 1824, Wm. Roscoe, 10 vols.; 1831, Dyce, 3 vols., Aldine poets (often reprinted); 1835, Croly, 4 vols.; 1871–1889, Elwin & Courthope, 10 vols., long the standard edition; 1903, H. W. Boynton, "Cambridge Poets"; 1908, Bronson of Brown University; 1935, C. A. Moore of Minnesota; and 1938, Stith Thompson of Indiana.

Version B.—1779, Dr. Johnson's "English Poets"; 1795, R. Anderson, "British Poets"; 1810, A. Chalmers, "English Poets"; 1858, R. Carruthers; 1869, A. W. Ward, "Globe" edition (often reprinted); in America, 1875, etc., Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations;* 1931, George Sherburn, of Chicago (later Columbia, now Harvard); 1932, R. F. Jones, of Washington University (St. Louis); 1932, Ronald S. Crane, of Chicago; and 1933, J. W. Tupper, of Lafayette College.

[3]Pope's letter of 11 April 1739 thanking Warburton is a perennial marvel to the readers of Pope's biography. The sentence "you understand me as well as I do myself, but you express me better

and supplying notes to go with it. And, as yet another, he was presently to assist in the publication of a handsome new quarto edition of all the poet's works which project, however, was cut short by Pope's death in May, 1744.

The first piece of evidence shows a mind prepared and fortified to act. It is a note in the *New Dunciad,* published in March, 1742, which shows that already by early 1742, perhaps far back in 1741 or even earlier, Warburton's pompous pride (ὕβρις) had led him to believe he could improve on Pope's diction (logic) in the *Essay on Criticism.* The burlesquing note is a discussion of "Arbitrary" in a line in the *New Dunciad* (modern editions, IV, 182), thus

> *—if Dulness sees a grateful day,*
> *'Tis in the shade of* Arbitrary *sway.*

And grateful it is in Dulness to make this confession. I will not say she alludes to that celebrated verse of Claudian,

> *—numquam* Libertas *gratior extat*
> *Quam sub* Rege *pio—*

But I will say, that the words *Liberty* and *Monarchy* have been frequently confounded and mistaken one for the other by the gravest authors. I should therefore conjecture, that the genuine reading of the fore-cited verse was thus,

> *—numquam* Libertas *gratior extat*
> *Quam sub* Lege *pia—*

and that *Rege* was the reading only of Dulness herself. And therefore she might allude to it. SCRIBL.

I judge quite otherwise of this passage: The genuine reading is *Libertas* and *Rege:* So Claudian gave it. But the error lies in the first verse. It should be *Exit* not *Exstat,* and then the meaning will be, that Liberty was never lost, or *went away* with so good a grace, as under a good King; it being without doubt a tenfold shame to lose it under a bad one.

This further leads me to animadvert upon a most grievous piece of nonsense to be found in all the Editions of the Author of the

---

than I could express myself" gave the Reverend William a very long rope.

Dunciad himself. A most capital one it is, and owing to the Confusion above-mentioned by Scriblerus of the two words *Liberty* and *Monarchy:*

> *Nature, like* Monarchy, *is but restrain'd*
> *By the same Laws herself at first ordain'd.*
> Ess. on Crit., 90–91.

Who sees not, it should be, *Nature, like* Liberty? Correct it therefore, *repugnantibus omnibus,* (even tho' the Author himself should oppugn) in all the impressions which have been, or shall be, made of his works. BENTLEY.

What is certain in this double-barreled note is the desire to alter the wording of a line in the *Essay on Criticism;* two years later, in the 1744 quarto *Essay,* "Monarchy" was gone and "Liberty" appeared in its place; and "Liberty" has remained in line 90 to this day. What is not less plain is that the mind prepared to act is Warburton's, not Pope's. The note *(ex pede gravissimo)* is Warburton through and through; the lumbering, devious progression in rhetoric, the bias toward the paradoxical in the writer's mental structure, the half-hiding a serious intention of future action behind an imitation of a burlesque, all betoken Warburton.

The second piece of evidence manifests Warburton's intention to improve Pope's rhetoric, not this time in the choice of diction but in regularizing the blocks of thought. For thirty years Pope had prided himself upon an informal ease in the style of his writings, as of gentlemanly conversation;[4] now the new editor in commentary and notes was determined to find or make a great rhetorical regularity. One move to attain his end was, in printing the Pegasus passage in the 1744 quarto, to shift the "Great Wits" couplet from second place to the end, to follow the rest

[4]Compare the comment of the *Spectator,* No. 253 (20 December 1711): . . . "a very fine Poem, I mean *The Art of Criticism,* which was published some months since, and is a Masterpiece in its kind. The Observations follow one another like those in *Horace's Art of Poetry,* without that Methodical Regularity which would have been requisite in a Prose Author."

of the passage not as a part of it but as the beginning of another block of thought. Then he comments:

> Our author, in these two general precepts of studying *Nature* and her *Commentators* [the ancients], having considered Poetry as it *is*, or *may be* reduced to *Rule;* lest this should be mistaken as sufficient to attain PERFECTION either in *writing* or *judging*, he proceeds [lines 140–201] to point up to those *sublimer beauties* which *Rules* will never reach, nor enable us either to *execute* or *taste* [*i.e.*, appreciate]: And which rise so high above all precept as not even to be described by it; but being entirely the gift of Heaven, Art and Reason have no further concern with them than just to moderate [in a later edition *regulate*] their operations. These *Sublimities* of Poetry, like the *Mysteries* of Religion, some of which are above Reason, and some contrary to it, may also be divided into two sorts, such as are *above* Rules, and such as are *contrary* to them.
>
> The first sort our author describes [lines 145–158, including all the B version except the "Great Wits" couplet] and shews, that where a great beauty is in the *Poet*'s view which no stated *Rules* will direct him how to reach, there, as the purpose of Rules is only to promote an end like this, a lucky *License* will supply the want of them: Nor can the Critic fairly object to it, since this *License*, for the reason given above, has the proper force and authority of a *Rule*.
>
> He [Pope] describes next [in the "Great Wits" couplet as lines 159–60 and the lines that follow] the *second sort*, the beauties *against rule*. And even here, as he observes, the offense is so glorious, and the fault so sublime, that the *true Critic* will not dare either to censure or reform them. Yet still the *Poet* is never to abandon himself to his Imagination: The rules our author lays down for his conduct in this respect, are these: 1. That tho' he transgress the *letter* of some *one particular* precept, yet that he still adheres to the end or *spirit* of them *all;* which end is the creation of *one perfect uniform Whole*. And 2. That he have, in each particular instance, the authority of the *dispensing* power of the Ancients to plead for his excuse. These rules observed, this license will be *seldom* used, and only when *compell'd* by need: which will disarm the Critic, and screen the Poet from his laws.

Manifestly Warburton was so enchanted, so infatuated with the likeness he had discovered between the sublimities of poetry and the mysteries of religion, he felt that if an emendation of the poem made the likeness stronger and clearer, it was right, proper, and advantageous for him to make the emendation. In his mind, fascinated as

it was by the light of its own thought, the word "Pegasus" registered only as poet-in-exalted-flight; his note on line 150 shows that he was entirely oblivious to the image of horse:

> *Thus* Pegasus, &c.] We have observed how the precepts for *writing* and *judging* are interwoven throughout the whole work. He first describes the sublime flight of a *Poet*, soaring above all vulgar bounds, to snatch a *grace* directly, which lies beyond the reach of a common adventurer. And afterwards, the *effect* of that *grace* upon the true *Critic:* whom it penetrates with an equal rapidity, going the nearest way to his heart, without passing thro' his judgment. By which is not meant that it could not stand the test of Judgment; but that being a beauty uncommon, and *above rule*, and the judgment habituated to determine only *by rule*, it makes its direct application to the Heart; which once gained, soon opens and enlarges the Judgment whose concurrence, it being now set above forms, is easily procured. That this is the poet's sublime conception appears from the concluding words:
>
> *—and all its end at once attains.*
>
> But Poetry doth not attain *all its end*, till it hath gained the *Judgment* as well as *Heart.*

The B version, the bad one, held its place in print for twenty years and ten editions as the standard text, to the exclusion of the A version, from 1744 to 1763.[5]

Two contemporary readers are known to have expressed dissatisfaction with a figure of speech that made a horse snatch a grace. One was the notorious John Wilkes, who when making MS. notes in his set of the 1751 edition of Pope's *Works*, was displeased by the incongruity in the passage. The other was Joseph Warton, who in 1756 in his *Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope* quotes lines 150–55 of the B version, and comments:

> Here is evidently a blamable mixture of metaphors, where the attributes of the horse and the writer are confounded . . . how can a horse 'snatch a grace,' or 'gain the heart'?

---

[5]It appeared in the Warburton editions of February, 1744, 1751 (twice), 1752, 1753, 1754, 1756, 1757 (twice), and (accompanied by a new royal copyright privilege) 1760.

The third piece of evidence is a cancel leaf and its progeny. Some time in 1763 or 64 Warburton changed his mind, and altered the text. Apparently he did both suddenly. His publishers had reprinted his edition of Pope's *Works* in six fattish volumes and dated the title pages 1764. He ordered, after the printing but before publication, that a leaf in the "Essay on Criticism," pages 79–80, be cut out and a newly printed leaf be pasted to the stub of the canceled leaf—for the lone purpose of discarding the B version and restoring the A version to be the authorized, authenticated text of the "Essay."

Aside from the cancellation of a leaf, there was no fanfare, no overt acknowledgment, no significant alteration of a note to call the reader's attention to the editor's rectification of the text. But right then and there Mr. Hyde died the death. And he should have been swept away in the canceled leaves and other trash to ashes and oblivion. For after that editorial operation of repentance and restitution, the correct text, Version A, was printed in the ensuing half-dozen Warburton editions, 1766 to 1788. (Warburton died in 1779.)[6] And Wakefield chose it for his Volume I (all printed), thereby joining the group Warton to Elwin & Courthope. In another tradition, however, the B version was reprinted—in a 6-volume Edinburgh edition in 1766, and frequently afterwards in by-blows without or beyond the law; it had, as has been said before, a long posthumous existence.

Now, to round back to the initial inquiry: Early Warburton or Late Warburton? The early editors from Wake-

---

[6]The A version in Late Warburton editions: 1764, 6 vols.; 1766, 9 vols.; 1769, Ruffhead aided by Warburton, 5 vols., large quarto; 1770, 9 vols. (with eleven volumes of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*); 1776, 6 vols.; 1778, anonymous editor, 4 vols.; and 1788, 6 vols. In 1794 Gilbert Wakefield repeated Version A in Vol. I of a planned edition, which he dropped when he heard that Warton was editing Pope's *Works*.

I have access in Austin to all books mentioned in this article except two. For checking the 1760 and 1770 editions I owe and gratefully pay my thanks to Professor Sherburn.

field and Warton to Elwin & Courthope inherited from Late Warburton—without plainly saying so, to be sure, and probably *via* the scissors and pastepot route. Among the late editors, from Carruthers onward, many have thought it virtuous to choose Early Warburton, the 1751 edition, as basic text—only to find themselves betrayed by virtue, or by a half-virtue. For when a "basic text" is to be chosen, it may be averred, without belaboring the proverbial goose and gander, that what is good for author is also good for literary executor; if it is a good rule to choose as basic the latest revision supervised by the author, then choice of the latest among the executor's editions is just as good a rule, and as mandatory unless reasons why not can be shown.

The conclusion of the whole matter of this life-story of a passage in Pope's *Essay on Criticism* is that as an EDITOR OF POPE Warburton, Early or Late, is to be lifted down from any pedestal of respect, and is to be treated with a very great deal of skepticism and very little of reverence.

GERARD AND THE SCOTS SOCIETIES

By Margaret Lee Wiley

Two eighteenth-century societies in Scotland played a conspicuous part in the development of aesthetic theory: the Aberdeen Philosophical Society and the Edinburgh Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Sciences, Manufactures, and Agriculture. The roll of metaphysicians associated in the Aberdeen Philosophical Society includes names of lasting literary fame; and one of that group—Alexander Gerard, the teacher of a famous pupil, James Beattie—has the distinction of being connected with both societies, primarily through his interest in the basis of creative and critical impulses. A consideration of his work shows the interests and the influence of the societies in this field.

In 1755, the Edinburgh Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Sciences, Manufactures, and Agriculture announced a medal for the best essay on taste.[1] This offer of a prize placed the subject of taste upon a level with the most common subjects of life and commerce in Scotland, since similar awards were to be made for the best dissertation upon vegetation and agriculture, and for the best discovery in science, the best printed book, the best printed cloth, the best imitation of English blankets, the best hogshead of strong ale, and the best hogshead of porter, and lucrative prizes to be awarded for excellence in such skills as cheese-making and rag-gathering. Though the award was due in 1756, the premium for the essay on taste was not given until January, 1758, when it was announced that the medal had been awarded to Alexander Gerard.[2]

At the time of the award, Gerard, thirty years old, had studied at Marischal College, had been licensed to preach,

---

[1] *Scots Magazine*, March, 1755, p. 129.

[2] *Scots Magazine*, January, 1758, p. 43.

was professor of moral philosophy at Marischal College, and had written an improved plan of education, which was adopted in the curriculum of Marischal College. In 1758, the year he received the award, he himself offered a medal, also to be awarded by the Edinburgh Society, for the best dissertation on style in composition. From this time forward, though preoccupied with the ministry and with instruction in divinity at Marischal and later at King's College, Gerard kept an interest in the philosophy of composition.

In 1759, when he published his prize work, *An Essay on Taste,* an ampler version than the essay which he had submitted to the Society, Gerard stated explicity in his Advertisement that his essay was due to the repeated offers of a prize by the Edinburgh Society: "This determined the author to enter on the following enquiry into the nature of Taste; the general principles of which he only presented to the Society, suspecting that the whole might exceed the limits which they had fixed, by requiring an essay. The judges for the subject, having been pleased to assign the premium to him, he is encouraged to offer the whole, as it was first composed, to the public."

An Essay on Taste was listed among the new books in the *Scots Magazine* and the *Gentleman's Magazine,* both in May, 1759, with the statement that the essay had been awarded a medal by the Edinburgh Society. In the same list of books, however, in each periodical there appeared a review of Edward Young's *Conjectures on Original Composition,* with copious quotation from the work. Young's *Conjectures* was one of Millar's books, and the London representative for *An Essay on Taste* (Edinburgh: A. Kincaid and J. Bell) was Millar. Inasmuch as both books contain discussions of genius, the fact seems worthy of mention, Young's having received much comment for priority among the eighteenth-century essays on genius and originality.

Gerard had become a member of the Aberdeen Philosophical Society in 1758, the year of its founding, and

he remained an active member until 1772, the last year of its existence. The Club met alternately at one of two taverns for a three-hour session, during which there was time for conversation and a supper, not to exceed eighteen pence. The club was not large, and attendance was estimated at a half dozen. As an active and productive member of the Philosophical Society, Gerard associated with such men as Reid, Campbell, Beattie, Gregory, and Blackwell. The purpose of the Society was to read and discuss philosophical dissertations and discourses. Philological, grammatical, and historical discussions were excluded, but the relation of philosophy to the arts was considered a pertinent study.[3]

The published work of the members bore a direct relation to the questions propounded and the papers read at the Society's meetings. Between 1758 and 1771, Gerard read papers on genius and a paper on the effect of the passions on the association of ideas. During the years between 1761 and 1768, he inquired into the operation of the mind in forming ideas, the mind's approbation of the fine arts, and the character of poetical imagination. These subjects are fundamental to Gerard's *Essay on Taste* (1759) and his later work, *An Essay on Genius* (1774). The subject of genius seems to have been of particular interest to the members of the Society. As early as April 22, 1758, John Farquhar proposed for discussion the question: "In the perfection of what faculty does genius consist? Or if in a combination of faculties, what are they?" Gerard's discourses on the subject superseded the treatment of the questions.

Fifteen years after the publication of *An Essay on Taste* (1759) and a year after the Aberdeen Philosophical Society had held its last meeting, Gerard published *An Essay on Genius* (1774). In his *Advertisement,* Gerard

---

[3]The best single account of the Aberdeen Philosophical Society available is in James McCosh's *The Scottish Philosophy,* New York: Robert Carter, 1875.

asserted that he composed the first part of *An Essay on Genius* as early as 1758, that is, one year before the publication of Young's *Conjectures,* and that he planned the second part as early. These parts of his larger study were probably conceived first as those discourses before the Philosophical Society which superseded Farquhar's questions.[4] From a study of Gerard's interests at the meetings of the Society, it is believable than *An Essay on Genius* was composed, in part, between the Edinburgh offer of a medal (1755) and the publication of his prize essay on taste (1759), which, as I have noted, contains material treating genius extensively. Whatever the date of his first work, however, Gerard deserves a place in the van of eighteenth-century essayists on genius, specifically in attempting to discover the source of genius rather than its evidence alone. Young's insistence upon originality emphasizes the effect rather than the process of original composition. Gerard's treatment is more nearly an attempt to analyze philosophically the process by which novelty, an attribute of genius, comes into being.

According to Gerard, the power of imagination in which genius originates is that of association. He believed that even after remembrance fails, ideas still have some connection with each other and that after ideas have lost their earlier relations to an original, imagination can connect them by new relations, according to the laws of resemblance, contrariety, two-fold contrariety, and vicinity. In just this power of the imagination—comprehensive, regular, and active—Gerard discovered the true origin of genius. Here was Gerard's answer to Farquhar's question: "In the perfection of what faculty does genius consist?"

The effect of Gerard's discourses at the Aberdeen Philosophical Society and his printed books was to take poetry from the muses and locate it in any man's mind. From

---

[4]James McCosh, *The Scottish Philosophy,* "Questions proposed in the Philosophical Society in Aberdeen," item 18 for April 22, 1758.

being a gift, poetry had become, for Gerard, a normal functioning of the mind. His is the democratic as well as the psychological view of poetry that brings poetry down from Olympus to dwell in a garret. If Gerard did not discover new geniuses, if he did not discover new laws of association, if he did not find new ingredients of genius, he did quite as much for criticism by giving familiar terms meaning and tangible significance. Gerard was perhaps the first to apply the principles of association to Shakespeare's plays. If he was not the first, he shares the honor with perhaps only one other.[5] Such a distinction would alone lend significance to the Scots Societies' induction of Gerard into the theories of poetic composition.

---

[5]Professor R. W. Babcock, in *The Genesis of Shakespeare Idolatry* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1931), named William Richardson as the first, and did not mention the similar significance of Gerard. Though dated 1774, Richardson's *A Philosophical Analysis and Illustration of Some of Shakespeare's Remarkable Characters*, referred to by Mr. Babcock, is said, to have made its appearance in 1775; see Robert Chambers's *A Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen*, Glasgow: Blackie and Son, 1835, IV, 152.

CHARLOTTE BROOKE'S *RELIQUES OF IRISH POETRY* AND THE OSSIANIC CONTROVERSY

By Kenneth F. Gantz

The attack of James Macpherson on the literature and the traditions of Ireland and the defense it aroused among the indignant Irish antiquarians and scholars[1] has been obscured by the controversy which once raged over his claim to be the discoverer and translator of Scotch epics and in which, in truth, the protests from across the Irish Channel rumbled ineffectively in England for the time; but if the materials and methods available in the late eighteenth century to disclose Macpherson's imposture are to be known, a long chapter in the final history of the Ossianic controversy must be devoted to the Irish defense. A necessary preliminary is the study of Miss Charlotte Brooke's *Reliques of Irish Poetry*,[2] the first book to present any quantity of Irish poetry to the public. Especially is it necessary to understand its position in the Ossianic controversy and its significance as a rebuttal to Macpherson and his followers.

Macpherson's threat to the reputation of Irish antiquities was twofold. One avenue of danger proceeded merely from the presentation[3] of his free versions of Ossianic

---

[1] *Cf.* C[harles] O'Conor, "Editor's Preface," in his edition of Roderic O'Flaherty's *The Ogygia Vindicated* (Dublin, 1775), pp. xiii ff.

[2] *Reliques of Irish Poetry: Consisting of Heroic Poems, Odes, Elegies, and Songs, Translated into English Verse: with Notes Explanatory and Historical; and the Originals in the Irish Character. To which is Subjoined an Irish Tale* (Dublin, 1789). All citations by page are to the second edition (Dublin, 1816).

[3] *Fragments of Ancient Poetry, Collected in the Highlands of Scotland and Translated from the Galic or Erse Language* (Edinburgh, 1760); *Fingal, an Ancient Epic Poem, in Six Books, Composed by Ossian the Son of Fingal* (London, 1762 [Dec. 1761]); *Temora, an Ancient Epic Poem, in Eight Books, together with Several Poems, Composed by Ossian, Son of Fingal, Translated from the Gaelic Language* (London, 1763).

lore, which were composed from garbled and incongruous fragments orally, or at least unreliably, transmitted in the alien environment of the Scotch Highlands and which, therefore, because of their tremendous currency, were fixing false impressions of the nature and source of Ossianic poetry and even stirring up doubt as to the existence of the true Irish Ossianic cycle.[4] A second lay through the critical notes and prefaces of his poems, in which Macpherson directly assailed the Irish literature and records of the past.[5] He labeled the Irish Ossianic poems "forgeries" and "trivial compositions,"[6] and scored the Irish historians for ignorance.[7] He declared that only his account of Oisin[8] and his age was true; he deprived the Irish of their Finn and Ulster cycles, indeed of all poetry older than three centuries; he spirited away their history and left them only "fictions"; he reduced their mother tongue to a degeneration of the Scottish—in short, he flung into the astonished faces of Irish antiquarians such an array of contradictions of accepted fact that they were furious to expose him.

The storm from Ireland broke in 1766.[9] Charles O'Conor forcefully pointed out discrepancies in chronology and

---

[4]Upon the publication of *Temora*, the strain of swallowing the discovery of a second Gaelic epic in as many years was so great that many English readers lost belief in Oisin himself (J. F. Campbell, *Leabhar na Feinne* [London, 1872], p. 180. Details of the general Ossianic controversy are available in standard works, such as P. Van Tieghem's *Ossian en France* (Paris, 1917), pp. 50–79.

[5]*Cf. Gentleman's Magazine*, LXI (1787), 34–5.

[6]*Cf.* the notes to the *Fragments*. These notes were not in the first edition.

[7]*Cf.* "Preface," *Fingal*.

[8]*Oisin* will be used throughout to refer to the son of Finn, the hero of the Irish Finn cycle; *Ossian* will refer to Macpherson's character.

[9]In 1764 there had appeared a series of articles by *un sçavant Irlandois* in the *Journal des Scavans* calling Macpherson to account for pillaging the Irish epic matter to enhance his own fictions.

geography in Macpherson's poems,[10] and in a later work he denounced them as "mere modern compositions" which contradict the facts recorded in Irish annals and denied that originals existed or that such works could have been preserved in their primitive purity by oral tradition.[11] Here appeared the crux of the matter; in England from friend and foe alike the demand grew for Macpherson to produce the originals of the alleged translations.[12] As the

---

In England the controversy lulled from 1764 to 1774, when a second phase revolving about the demand for Macpherson's originals *(cf. infra)* broke out (*cf.* Van Tieghem, *Ossian en France*, pp. 52 ff).

[10]In the appendix to his *Dissertations on the Ancient History of Ireland* (2d ed.).

[11]"Editor's Preface," *The Ogygia Vindicated* (1775). *Cf.* Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Dec. 8, 1761: "I cannot believe it [*Fingal*] genuine—I cannot believe a regular poem of six books has been preserved, uncorrupted, by oral tradition, from the times before Christianity was introduced into the island. What! preserved unadulterated by savages dispersed among mountains, and so often driven from their dens, so wasted by wars civil and foreign! Has one man ever got all by heart? I doubt it. Were parts preserved by some, other parts by others? Mighty lucky, that the tradition was never interrupted, nor any part lost—not a verse, not a measure, not the sense! luckier and luckier." (*The Letters of Horace Walpole, Fourth Earl of Orford*, ed. by Mrs. Paget Toynbee, V [Oxford, 1904], 150.) Macpherson had claimed that his translation of *Fingal* was literal ("A Dissertation Concerning the Antiquity, etc. of the Poems of Ossian the Son of Fingal," *Fingal*, p. xvi. *Cf.* also his "Preface," *ibid.*, p. 1); and Dr. Hugh Blair had made the same claim for the *Fragments* in his "Preface" to that work and for all of *Ossian* in the last paragraph of his "Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian, the Son of Fingal" (1763), a most influential contribution to the controversy.

[12]As is well known, Dr. Johnson's common sense could not overlook this obvious and immediate way to settle the controversy, and in 1773 he undertook a journey into Scotland in order, among other reasons, to see if there was a possibility of the existence of originals (*cf.* Van Tieghem, *Ossian en France*, p. 53). Johnson's announced confirmation of his suspicions was supported by the tours of other investigators. William Shaw, the Scotch Gaelic scholar, gave Macpherson the lie direct and Matthew Young, Fellow and later Professor in the University of Dublin, could find no confirmation

debate wore on into the eighties, translators displayed their anxiety to guarantee the authenticity of their work by publishing their originals,[13] and by the end of the decade the principal issue of the controversy over Macpherson's poems was clearly that of their originals.[14] Other issues were: (1) Did Macpherson's poems disagree with the accepted Irish chronology? (2) Were the customs depicted in them those of Oisin's times? (3) Was their geography at fault? (4) Were they different from the Celtic poetry that other collectors had found? (5) If there were no originals, could so large a body of poetry, complete epics, have been transmitted by oral tradition? Irish scholars were confident that any examination of Irish poetry would settle these issues for all time; and Miss Brooke's *Reliques of Irish Poetry,* with its careful discussion of dates, its accord of time and customs, its Irish geography, its agreement with

---

for Macpherson (*cf. Gentleman's Magazine,* LI [1781], 252; William Hammond Drummond, "Subject Proposed by the Royal Irish Academy—To Investigate the Authenticity of the Poems of Ossian," *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy,* XVI [1830], Pt. II, p. 5). Macpherson, however, never relinquished his claim to have had originals and to have exhibited them in 1762; and in 1807 the Highland Society of London published *The Poems of Ossian in the Original Gaelic.* The modernity of the Gaelic and other incongruities of these published "originals" refutes any claim of Macpherson to have translated from ancient Gaelic manuscripts or from copies of such manuscripts. The possibility of literal oral sources seems equally to be precluded by the failure of other collectors to find any such traditions as are embodied in Macpherson's *Ossian* (see G. M. Fraser's summary account of Macpherson's originals in "The Truth about 'Ossian,'" *Quarterly Review,* CCXLV [1925], 331–45).

[13]*Cf.* Thomas Hill, "Authentic Detail of Particulars Concerning Ossian and his Poems," *Gentleman's Magazine,* LII (1782), 570–1; LIII (1783), 33–6, 140–4, 398–400; LIV (1783), 590–2, 662–5; Joseph Cooper Walker, *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards* (2d ed.; Dublin, 1818), I, 51–6 (*cf. Gentleman's Magazine,* LXI [1787], 34–5); Matthew Young, *Antient Gaelic Poems Respecting the Race of the Fians, Collected in the Highlands of Scotland in the Year 1784* (Dublin, 1787).

[14]*Cf.* Van Tieghem, *Ossian en France,* pp. 53 ff.

other Celtic poetry,[15] its clear designation of manuscript sources, and its inclusion of originals within the volume, exhibits a thoroughgoing attempt to meet them and at the same time to bring obviously genuine medieval Irish poetry[16] to the public attention.

In her preface Miss Brooke aligns herself with the defenders of her country: "My comparatively feeble hand aspires only . . . to strew flowers in the path of these laureled champions of my country [O'Conor,[17] Sylvester O'Halloran,[18] and Charles Vallancey[19]]." She would prefer

---

[15]After the controversy had run its course, it was seen that an important factor in the refutation of Macpherson's claims had been that his translations did not resemble those of practically all other investigators, which were in agreement on a tone, style, *etc.*, markedly dissimilar to his (*cf.* "Ossian Redivivus," *Times*, Oct. 14, 1869, p. 4).

[16]The desire for such a volume had been expressed. Thomas Hill had said: "I sincerely wish, that some gentleman possessed of adequate abilities and acquaintance with the Erse language would undertake to collect the Ossianic songs in their simple original state. . . . I own, however, that I should rather chuse to seek for them in Ireland than in Scotland: but neither country should be unexplored (*Gentleman's Magazine*, LIV [1783], 665). Dr. Johnson had wished for "large publications in the Irish language" (Johnson to Charles O'Conor, May 19, 1777, James Boswell, *Life of Dr. Johnson*, ed. by John Wilson Croker [London, 1866], p. 531. *Cf.* also Johnson to O'Conor, April 9, 1757, *ibid.*, p. 108). Even Macpherson had said that he would like to see Irish antiquities collected ("Dissertation," *Temora*, p. xi).

[17]Charles O'Conor (1710–1791). His enthusiasm must be admitted to have exceeded his scholarly attainments. Though his work shows a considerable reading in Irish literature, his education was defective. Yet he was familiar with Irish from boyhood and collected a library of old Irish manuscripts. He took great satisfaction in any manifestation of interest in his favorite study *(D.N.B.)*.

[18]See note 62.

[19]Charles Vallancey (1721–1812). To the defense of Irish literature and history he brought merely the aid of the untrained amateur. Going to Ireland in 1762, he became interested in the history, language, and antiquities of that country, but never acquired a real knowledge of old or modern Irish. His zeal rather than the quality of his achievement seems to justify Miss Brooke's admiration, as

that someone more talented than herself would undertake "a subject of such importance and boldly throw his gauntlet to Prejudice," but she hopes that the *Reliques* will attain seven objectives in defense of Irish culture.

(1) *"To throw some light on the antiquities" of Ireland.* Macpherson threatened the repute of the whole system of Irish poetry by assembling "Scotch epics" from fragments preserved in the Highlands.[20] He asserted that all genuine remains of the works of Ossian[21] were in Scotland[22] and that he had obtained a complete collection of these pieces by means of personal endeavor and the assistance of correspondents. On the basis of "internal proofs" he found that the poems of Ossian were not of Irish composition.[23] The belief that Fingal was Irish, he declared, arose from the practice of Irish bards of ascribing their own compositions to Ossian.[24] This assertion of Scotch nationality for Finn, striking as it did at a major portion of the Irish epic heritage, had provoked the first public attack on Macpherson by competent authority, Dr. Ferdinando Warner;[25] but Macpherson had not retreated from his

---

his several works on the Irish language and history (including a *Vindication of the History of Ireland* and "An Essay on the Antiquity of the Irish language") are misleading in fact and extravagant in theory *(D.N.B.)*.

[20]Cf. Campbell, *Leabhar na Feinne*, p. 180.

[21]The Finn and Ulster cycles were commingled by Macpherson.

[22]*Cf.* Macpherson's biographer, Bailey Saunders: "[Macpherson] was well aware that Ossianic poetry existed in Ireland, and he took a very simple course;—he denounced it as spurious. If he came across any fragments in the Highlands which seemed to savour of Irish tradition, he was careful to reject them" (*The Life and Letters of James Macpherson* [London, 1894], p. 115).

[23]"Dissertation," *Temora*, pp. xviii, xxii.

[24]"Preface," *Fingal.*

[25]In his *Remarks on the History of Fingal, and Other Poems of Ossian Translated by Mr. Macpherson* (London, 1762). Although English, Dr. Warner had gone to Dublin in 1761 to prepare for his *History of Ireland* (1763) and had spent some time studying manuscripts in various libraries *(D.N.B.)*.

position. In his next publication he claimed to have in his possession all the poems in Irish concerning Finn. They were, he judged, of poor quality, and contrary to the belief of Irish scholars, of recent composition, less than three centuries old. Indeed, according to Macpherson, all Irish poems were written in a late dialect corrupted by many English borrowings.[26]

(2) *To vindicate, in part, Ireland's history.* Macpherson opened his attack on Irish history by impugning the Irish claim to priority over the Scotch in language and in settlement. From the "purity" of Scotch Gaelic, as compared with the Irish, he inferred that the latter was a corrupt descendant of the former. This, he explained, was a natural consequence of the fact, which "admitted no doubt," that Ireland was colonized by the Scotch instead of Scotland by the Irish.[27] Ossian, he said, has preserved the history of the first migrations of the Scotch into Ireland.[28]

The background of Irish historical lore in the Ossianic poetry he explained as a result of the opposition of the

---

[26]"Dissertation," *Temora,* pp. xxiii–xxxii. *Cf. The Poems of Ossian in the Original Gaelic with a Literal Translation into Latin* (Published under the sanction of the Highland Society of London; London, 1807), I, 26; II, 147–8. According to J. S. Smart, the Irish ballads for which Macpherson professed such contempt and which he claimed were easily separated from the "genuine" relics of the "authentic" Ossian of the third century were worthless fifteenth century imitations which he had obtained in Scotland (*James Macpherson, an Episode in Literature* [London, 1905], p. 131).

[27]Roderic O'Flaherty (c. 1630–1718, see note 35) had written his *Ogygia* [Irish annals] *Vindicated against the Objections of Sir George Mackenzie* (published in 1775 by O'Conor) for the chief purpose of "manifesting the antient *Irish* to have been the genuine primogenial *Scots* . . . who transmitted a colony of Scots into the north of Great-Britain" ("Dedication," *Ogygia Vindicated,* p. l). A like view to that of Macpherson had been advanced by Dr. John Macpherson in his *Critical Dissertations on the Origin, Antiquities, Language, Government, Manners, and Religion of the Ancient Caledonians, their posterity the Picts, and the British and Irish Scots* (London, 1768), "Dissertation VIII."

[28]"Dissertation," *Temora,* pp. iv, vii, ix, xxi.

English. Beset by this common enemy, the Irish and the Scotch fell into frequent and sympathetic intercourse. The Lowlands coming under the influence of the Saxons, the ancient language and traditional history was confined to the Highlanders, whom circumstances reduced to barbarism. It was not, then, difficult for the Irish to impose their fictitious history on the "ignorant Highland senachies." It was a result of the same circumstances that the Irish became acquainted with and carried off as their own the compositions of Ossian.[29]

The history of early Ireland, Macpherson continued, was largely the invention of the Irish bards and historians. The misconception of the flow of colonization between the two countries could be traced, he held, to the blunder of John Fordun, the Scotch chronicler,[30] in accepting Irish fiction for Scotch history.

> [John Fordun was] the first who collected those fragments of Scotch history which had escaped the brutal policy of Edward I. . . . Destitute of annals in Scotland he had recourse to Ireland, which, according to the vulgar errors of the times, was reckoned the first habitation of the Scots. He found, there, that the Irish bards had carried the pretensions to antiquity as high, if not beyond any nation in Europe. It was from them he took those improbable fictions, which form the first part of his history.
>
> The writers that succeeded Fordun implicitly followed his system.[31]

In fact, declared Macpherson, the whole of ancient Irish history was the product of the imagination of modern

---

[29]*Ibid.*, pp. xi, xxxii–xxxiii.

[30]John Fordun (d. 1384?) was the author of *Chronica Gentis Scotorum* (to 1153 A.D.) and *Gesta Annalia* (1153–1383). The preface of Walter Bower's *Scotichronicon*, which is partly based upon Fordun, states that after Edward "Langschankes," the tyrant, had carried off to England or had burned all the truly national records of the Scotch history, Fordun desired to repair the loss. After collecting in Scotland, he traveled to England and Ireland in quest of materials ("John Fordun," *D.N.B.*).

[31]"Dissertation," *Temora*, p. iii.

times; and he cited the Irish Sir James Ware,[32] "who was indefatigable in his researches after the antiquities of his country," as authority for rejecting as "mere fiction and idle romance all that is related of the antient Irish, before the time of St. Patrick, and the reign of Leogaire"[33] and for dismissing the "improbable and self-condemned tales of Keating[34] and O'Flaherty"[35] as "credulous and puerile to the last degree."[36]

(3) *To benefit her countrymen by a picture of the honor, patriotism, and refinement of "ancestors so very different from what modern prejudice has been studious to represent them."* Other writers than James Macpherson had called the ancient Irish illiterate.[37] In 1768 Dr. John Macpherson[38] had declared that "the Irish were wholly

---

[32]Important Irish antiquary and historian (1594–1666). Among his several works on Irish history and literature were *De Scriptoribus Hiberniae* (1639) and *De Hibernia et Antiquitatibus ejus Disquisitiones* (1654).

[33]Middle of the fifth century.

[34]Geoffrey Keating (1570?–1644?). His *Foras Feasa ar Eirinn* (1629), commonly known as *The History of Ireland,* was the first and only important effort to write a history of Ireland in Irish and for the Irish people. He drew not only on the traditional records and annals but on the romantic tales which contain most of the old historical tradition and made no attempt to separate history from romance (Eleanor Hull, *A Text Book of Irish Literature* [Dublin, (1908)], II, 136–40).

[35]See note 27. His *Ogygia, seu Rerum Hibernicarum Chronologia* (1685) was the first history of Ireland to circulate among English readers. He "endeavors by elaborate calculations to reconcile the differences in the dates of the Irish records, founding his own system on three ancient poems" (*Ibid.,* II, 92).

[36]"Dissertation," *Temora,* pp. x–xi. Dr. Ferdinando Warner challenged Ware's authority on the ground of his inability to understand his materials because of his ignorance of Irish (Ferdinando Warner, *The History of Ireland* [London, 1763], I, iii). Charles O'Conor preferred the same charge ("Editor's Preface," *Ogygia Vindicated,* p. xxi).

[37]*Cf.* O'Conor's discussion of them in "Editor's Preface," *Ogygia Vindicated,* pp. xi–xiii.

[38]Scotch clergyman and antiquarian. One of Macpherson's hosts during his journey of 1760 into the Highlands.

unacquainted with letters, till St. Patric brought them into their country, about the year 432," and that they were then living in a very low state of civilization.[39] He had been rebuked by O'Conor,[40] with whose works Miss Brooke displays familiarity. James Macpherson had called the poetry of the Irish bards "indigested fictions" far inferior in probability to those of Ossian.[41] Miss Brooke replied that the Irish poems, especially those of the middle ages, were "faithful delineations of the manners and ideas of the periods in which they were composed" and that they did not delineate barbarism.

> The productions of our Irish bards exhibit a glow of cultivated genius,—a spirit of elevated heroism,—sentiments of true honor,—instances of disinterested patriotism,—and manners of a degree of refinement, totally astonishing when the rest of Europe was nearly sunk in barbarism.

(4) *To prove Ireland's claim to "scientific" as well as to military fame.* By "science" Miss Brooke evidently referred to the principles of poetic composition.

> It is impossible for imagination to conceive too highly of the pitch of excellence to which a science must have soared, which was cherished with such enthusiastic regard and cultivation as that of poetry, in this country. It was absolutely, for ages, the vital soul of the nation.[42]

(5) *"To rescue from oblivion a few of the invaluable reliques of [Ireland's] ancient genius."* Miss Brooke saw that the old Irish poetry, preserved only in manuscripts, was vanishing. "True it is, indeed, and much to be lamented, that few of the compositions of those ages that were famed, in Irish annals, for the *light of song,* are now to be obtained by most diligent research." Of those extant, the

---

[39]In *Critical Dissertations . . . on the Caledonians, etc.,* pp. 88–9.

[40]In "Editor's Preface," *Ogygia Vindicated,* pp. xii–xiii.

[41]"Dissertation," *Temora,* p. xix.

[42]In corroboration Miss Brooke cites Charles O'Conor, *Dissertations on the History of Ireland* (3d. ed.), p. 53.

greater part were medieval, the product of an age when "the genius of Ireland was on its wane."

(6) *To awaken "a just and useful curiosity" about Irish poetry.* Speaking of Irish song later in her book, she says that the subject seemed to demand notice, yet that it had never before received it.[43] In order to call attention to the characteristics of Irish poetry she grouped her selections by type—heroic poems, odes, elegies, and songs—and supplied them with explanatory prefaces and notes.

(7) *To introduce Irish poetry to English readers.* Irish poetry, as Miss Brooke said, was little known in England: "The British muse is not yet informed that she has an elder sister in this isle." Considering the contemporary interest in Celtic literature and especially in the Ossianic controversy, in its early years rivaled as a topic of public discussion only by the Cock Lane ghost,"[44] Miss Brooke might reasonably hope that the publication of Irish poetry would insure its circulation among English readers.

Thus the *Reliques* was intended to modify such conceptions of Irish poetry and history as Macpherson had rendered current or had attempted to establish. Miss Brooke's method of presentation confirms her preface, although a glance at her table of contents reveals that her purpose was not merely to exhibit Irish versions of Ossianic poetry, a controversial method that might have been especially effective so far as Macpherson was concerned. Rather than defend especially the Irish Finn cycle, she seems to have desired to uphold the reputation of all Irish poetry.[45]

---

[43]*Reliques*, p. 297.

[44]*Cf.* Saunders, *Life and Letters of Macpherson*, p. 171.

[45]Yet about two-thirds of her space (in originals) is devoted to the epic cycles. Two poems are from the Ulster cycle: "Conloch" ("Teacht Conláoich go hÉirinn"), "The Lamentation of Cucullin over the Body of his Son Conloch" (original without title); and five are Ossianic: "Magnus the Great" ("Láoidh Maghnuis Mhoir"), "The Chase" ("Láoidh na Sealga"), "Moira Borb" ("Láoidh an Mhóighre Bhoirb"), "War Ode to Osgur, the Son of Oisin, in the Front of the Battle of Gabhra" ("Rosg Osguir mhic Oisin re hucht

Accordingly she presents a general survey and specimen of the principal types, her seventeen selections coming from the modern as well as the older period and representing in fairly equal numbers the heroic poems, the odes, the elegies, and the songs.[46] But in other matters of presentation her methods might easily have been chosen with Macpherson's *Ossian* in mind. In translation she does not follow the practice of Macpherson. Although she felt it undesirable if not impossible to make her translations literal, she tried to make them so in essence. She wished to produce a scholarly rendition of the true qualities of Celtic verse and to allay all doubt as to the authenticity of her materials.

> I do not profess to give merely a literal version of my originals, for that I should have found an impossible undertaking.—Besides the spirit which they breathe, and which fills the imagination far above the tameness, let me say, the *injustice*, of such a task,—there are many complex words that could not be translated literally, without great injury to the original—without being "false to its sense, and falser to its fame."
>
> . . . . . .
>
> . . . I give the originals, as vouchers for the fidelity of my translation, as far as two idioms so widely different would allow.[47]

Miss Brooke also presents her translations in a scholarly setting, in a much more precise and effective background than Macpherson had offered. She gives an introductory discourse to each type of poetry represented, and she supplies each poem with notes, critical, historical, geographical, sociological. In both introductions and notes she frequently cites authority. She attempts to date the poems by language and by authority.[48] She touches on

---

chatha Gabhra"), "Ode to Gaul, the Son of Morni" ("Rosg Ghoill mac Morna"). Her texts are post-medieval.

[46]There is also an original "tale." Like most enthusiasts about old romance, Miss Brooke tried her hand at imitation, with a result of the usual quality.

[47]"Preface," *Reliques*, pp. cxxxi–cxxxiii.

[48]In this and the following matters, no attempt has been made in the present investigation to weigh the validity of Miss Brooke's conclusions or, it might be said here, the specific merits of her volume.

the problems of transmission,[49] and she explains variants.[50] She speculates on authorship,[51] and gives biographical data for the known authors.[52] She considers influences.[53] She points out beauties of the Irish tongue.[54] She is careful to state her sources, which are generally manuscripts supplied by her scholarly friends, and she does not forget the location of other manuscripts containing versions of her poems. Certain variants are presented in original and translation. In short, by the setting as well as by the presentation of her translations, Miss Brooke sought to rectify the impressions Macpherson and his school had given the English public of Irish poetry.

It might be urged, however, that Miss Brooke was not entirely disinterested, in that the revival of interest in Celtic literature afforded her financial opportunity. Certainly one immediate cause of the *Reliques* was her lack of money. Following the death of her father, several financial reverses deprived her of most of her income.[55] Upon the advice of friends she sought to become housekeeper to the Royal Irish Academy, but did not obtain the position for which she seemed well qualified.[56] Another solution of her problem, which at the same time would promote a cause that deeply interested them, was perceived

---

Such evaluations seem better left for another study, as in this paper I am concerned only with establishing the controversial character of the *Reliques*.

[49]*Cf.* pp. 168–9.

[50]*Cf.* pp. 287–8.

[51]*Cf.* p. 172.

[52]*Cf.* pp. 253–5.

[53]*Cf.* p. 217.

[54]*Cf.* pp. 285–6.

[55]See Miss Brooke's petition to the Royal Irish Academy for the position of housekeeper, in Aaron Crossly Seymour's "Memoirs of Miss Brooke," prefixed to the *Reliques* (2d ed.), pp. liii–lv.

[56]Seymour's "Memoirs of Miss Brooke," *Reliques*, pp. liii, lv. The story of Miss Brooke's petition and the opposition it aroused is told in her letters to Bishop Percy (preserved in Nichols' *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century* [London, 1858], VIII, 247–52).

by certain of her literary associates. In a letter to Bishop Percy, with whom she had corresponded concerning her plan to secure the situation as housekeeper, now definitely abandoned, she mentioned the *Reliques* as an incipient volume of translations from old Irish poetry upon which she has been at work for some time.[57] The project, she said, had been suggested to her by two gentlemen, Judge Hellen and Mr. Dominick Trant,[58] whose friendship and judgment made their opinion decisive with her.

> They have almost persuaded me into a belief that it may be in my power to rescue from oblivion at least some portion of the native beauties of the language and genius of this neglected country: they wish me to translate into English verse some of our fine Irish manuscripts, which, for want of such translation, are unknown to the world, and they will kindly take upon themselves the care of the publication, which they say, shall be by subscription.[59]

But in December, 1790, Miss Brooke sent Percy a printed plan of the *Reliques*, which volume had been published a year before, and let him know that as a competence had been restored to her, she intended to bestow in charity any profits arising from the book.[60] Evidently, though, before this fortunate event[61] she and her friends had seen

---

[57]She began the *Reliques* in 1787 (Seymour, "Memoirs of Miss Brooke," *Reliques*, p. xxxix).

[58]Robert Hellen (d. 1793), second justice of the Court of Common Pleas in Ireland (*Gentleman's Magazine*, LXIII [1793] 769). According to Seymour, his library was one of the best in Ireland. He also collected antiquities ("Memoirs of Miss Brooke," *Reliques*, cxiv n). Dominick Trant (d. 1790), King's Advocate of the High Court of Admiralty in the Kingdom of Ireland (*Gentleman's Magazine*, LIX [1789], 1216). He was a well-known antiquary (Preface," *Reliques*, p. ix). Seymour says that Walker also was one of those who persuaded her ("Memoirs of Miss Brooke," *Reliques*, p. xxxix).

[59]Miss Brooke to Bishop Percy, June 6 [1788], Nichols, *Illustrations*, VIII, 250.

[60]Miss Brooke to Bishop Percy, Dec. 19, 1790, *ibid.*, p. 252.

[61]Perhaps followed by some new misfortune, as Miss Brooke's express statement, written a short time before the publication of the *Reliques*, is at variance with that of her biographer, written a few years after her death: "From the sale of her 'Reliques of

in her publication a means of making her at least some money. It seems, however, equally evident that an important consideration in the selection of this means and particularly in its manner of execution was the defense of Irish poetry. In her preface she acknowledged especially the assistance of Dominick Trant, Joseph Cooper Walker, and Sylvester O'Halloran.[62] It is unlikely that such jealous men of the Irish cause as at least the two latter were, would fail to instill in her a desire to refute the aspersions cast upon Irish poetry. Walker, whose friendship with Miss Brooke was intimate to the degree of almost daily association,[63] had devoted much effort to vindicating the injured character of Irish letters. And Sylvester O'Halloran, who contributed to the *Reliques* an "Introductory Discourse to the Poem of Conloch," and to whom

---

Irish Poetry,' and her father's works [1792], Miss Brooke was enabled to realize upwards of three hundred guineas, with which she purchased an annuity of forty pounds a year, which was all she possessed at the time of her death" (Seymour, "Memoirs of Miss Brooke," *Reliques*, p. lxiv).

[62]Walker (1762–1810), a life-long friend of Miss Brooke (Seymour, "Memoirs of Miss Brooke," *Reliques*, p. xxxv), was noted for his researches in Italian literature and in Irish antiquities. He was one of the original members of the Royal Irish Academy and was a contributor of various papers to its *Transactions*. His most famous work pertaining to Irish literature was his *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards*, published in 1786 *(D.N.B.)*. He was chosen to be one of the "committee of antiquities" of the R.I.A. in 1786 (*Gentleman's Magazine*, LXI [1787], 34). Later he projected a life of Miss Brooke ("Charlotte Brooke," *D.N.B.*). He was a friend of Bishop Percy (Nichols, *Illustrations*, VII, 687, 708 ff).

O'Halloran (1728–1807), surgeon and antiquary, came, despite extensive surgical research, to the defense of literary and historical Ireland. He knew the Irish language. His works bearing on the Ossianic controversy were: *Insula Sacra* (1770), "with a view to the preservation of the ancient Irish annals"; *Introduction to the Study of the History and Antiquities of Ireland* (1772); *Ierne Defended* (1774), a plea for the validity and authenticity of ancient Irish History; *General History of Ireland from the Earliest Accounts to the Close of the Twelfth Century* (1774). *D.N.B.*

[63]Seymour, "Memoirs of Miss Brooke," *Reliques*, p. xxxviii.

Miss Brooke acknowledged "innumerable obligations," had himself taken a prominent part in the defense of the Irish annals and historical works. It can scarcely be doubted that he would urge the publication of such a book if for no other reason than to further the cause he had so ardently supported.

Although I am not concerned at present with more than the general merit of Miss Brooke's *Reliques* as a document in the Ossianic controversy, in view of the considerable attention given at the time to Macpherson's lack of qualifications for his task,[64] a few words might be devoted to those of Miss Brooke. Considering the state of Irish studies during the eighteenth century and the consequent difficulty of their pursuit, she possessed the training and assistance necessary for a satisfactory contemporary treatment of her project. From her father, Henry Brooke, the author and philanthropist, who was much interested in Irish literature and Celtic antiquities,[65] it is likely that Miss Brooke, who as a girl revealed interest and ability in letters[66] and whose education was entirely in the hands of her father,[67] had an early introduction to Irish literature. In any event, after his death in 1783 had relieved her of his care, her interest in literature and general information increased. Conceiving a curiosity for antiquities, she began the study of the Irish language, which she

---

[64]Mr. Bailey Saunders allows Macpherson only a very imperfect acquaintance with Gaelic (*Life and Letters of Macpherson*, p. 62). *Cf.* Smart, *James Macpherson*, pp. 38–9.

[65]He produced at least three pieces showing Celtic influence and projected two other such works, for which there was insufficient interest to justify publication (Edward D. Snyder, *The Celtic Revival in English Literature, 1760–1800* [Cambridge, 1923], pp. 114, 115 n). Some verses in Irish had been addressed to him when he was a young man, which so pleased him that he determined to learn Irish, and although he never acted upon his resolution, he acquired literal translations of many popular Irish poems ([Charles Henry Wilson], *Brookiana* [London, 1804], I, 86–7).

[66]Seymour, "Memoirs of Miss Brooke," *Reliques*, pp. xi–xix.

[67]"Charlotte Brooke," *D.N.B.*

pursued so successfully that, if we accept the testimony of her memorialist Seymour, in less than two years she became perfect mistress of it.[68] In 1786 she contributed to Walker's *Historical Memoirs of Irish Bards* a verse translation of Carolan's "Monody on the Death of Mary Maguire," a piece of the early eighteenth century. Two years later Walker, whose word carried weight, had occasion to testify to her skill in the translation of Irish.[69] In the meantime, as she had learned the language, she had been led by her enjoyment of the poems to collect a few of them. The peasants, pleased by her attention to their language, brought her many scattered verses. By 1787 she possessed a considerable number of them.[70] When, in 1789, she undertook the *Reliques*, she obtained more from her friends.[71] In the preparation of that work Miss Brooke had the assistance of several learned friends. Some of them she invited to share formally the labor and honor of the undertaking, but they declined, feeling sure that her abilities were equal to her task. They supplied her, however, with valuable materials and suggestions.[72]

The *Reliques* was published in Dublin in 1789. Although it was noticed in some of the English reviews, on the whole favorably, its controversial significance was overlooked. The *Critical Review* carried a favorable article recommending Miss Brooke's performance "to the antiquary and the man of genius."[73] *The Monthly Review* was also commendatory, professing to see genius in Miss Brooke and thinking that she would make Irish poetry more

---

[68]Seymour, "Memoirs of Miss Brooke," *Reliques*, pp. xxxii–xxxiii.

[69]Walker to Richard Gough, Sept. 9, 1788, Nichols, *Illustrations*, VII, 707.

[70][Wilson], *Brookiana*, II, 211, 214.

[71]Seymour, "Memoirs of Miss Brooke," *Reliques*, p. xxxix.

[72]*Cf. ibid.*, p. xl; and the *Reliques*, *passim*. In her preface, Miss Brooke acknowledges the especial assistance of Dominick Trant, Joseph Cooper Walker, and Sylvester O'Halloran.

[73]LXX (1790), 22–34.

familiar to English readers. It evinced, however, no interest in the published originals or in Irish poetry as such.[74] *The English Review* admired Miss Brooke's taste and took pleasure in the perusal of all her poems.[75] It was natural that the *Reliques* be compared with Macpherson's *Ossian.* But contrary to what Miss Brooke might reasonably have expected, the appearance of her originals with their translations was taken by *The Critical Review* to support in some degree Macpherson's claim to be the discoverer of ancient epics. It declared: ". . . from what we find here, we cannot suppose, however he adorned or arranged, that he invented them."[76] Although this reviewer does not claim for Macpherson the title of translator, he was led, at least partially, into the already old blunder of seeing in the identity of scattered incidents and names in Macpherson's poems and in authentic relics proof that *Ossian* was taken from certain "originals." Nor did the critic for *The Monthly Review* realize that the full significance of Miss Brooke's publication of originals lay in the fact that the correspondence of her translations to them might thereby be verified. He did not realize that here, undoubtedly, were genuine translations of Celtic poems and that Macpherson's, unsupported by originals, were strangely unlike them. He does, though, point out what he thought that Macpherson should have done:

> Miss Brooke has given us, in the Irish character, the originals of the poems which she has translated. If Mr. Macpherson had done the same by the poems of Ossian, it would have silenced scepticism, and have prevented much polemic ire.[77]

The *Reliques* at least had made plain for doubters that there were Irish poems about Oisin. Their historical basis, though, was denied by one of her critics, who dismissed any supposed foundation in fact as the creation of Miss

---

[74]New Series, IV (1791), 37–46.
[75]*Cf.* [Wilson], *Brookiana,* II, 216.
[76]LXX, 24.
[77]New Series, IV, 45.

Brooke's patriotism, which, he said, "sometimes overflows the bounds of discretion." Furthermore, he could not accept the supposed antiquity of the poems.[78]

The judgment of scholars was also favorable. Miss Brooke was granted a position of authority, and her examples of Irish poetry were referred to as genuine ones. Walker considered her a competent scholar.[79] Even before the publication of the *Reliques* he assured a correspondent that he would "find it a work of infinite merit."[80] In the second edition of his *Historical Memoirs* he depended upon the *Reliques* in a matter of dating,[81] and called it "a work, of which Ireland has reason to be proud."[82] Another referred to her as "the learned and patriotic Miss Brooke," and cited her in support of his denial of the authenticity of *Ossian*.[83] Even Macpherson's defenders did not scruple to draw on her work.[84]

But such attentions as the *Reliques* received were few, and it was easily lost in the crowd of Ossianic publications. Despite its clear opposition to many of the dubious and erroneous assertions of Macpherson, who, however, is not mentioned in the volume, the *Reliques* did not materially lessen the faith of Macpherson's supporters,[85] as must be admitted by anyone who considers the subsequent history of the controversy. It seems a lost opportunity

---

[78]*Critical Review*, LXX, 22–3.

[79]*Cf.* his *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards*, I, 370 ff.

[80]Walker to Richard Gough, Sept. 20, 1788, Nichols, *Illustrations*, VII, 707.

[81]I, 370 ff.

[82]I, 366.

[83]Edward Davies, in *The Claims of Ossian* (2d ed.; London, 1825), pp. 16 ff.

[84]See note 85.

[85]In fact, they even cited it in their favor. *Cf.* Sir John Sinclair, "A Dissertation on the Authenticity of the Poems," *The Poems of Ossian in the Original Gaelic with a Literal Translation into Latin* (Published under the sanction of the Highland Society of London; London, 1870), I, xxxv; and *Report of the Committee of the Highland Society of Scotland Appointed to Inquire Into the Nature and Authenticity of the Poems of Ossian* (Edinburgh, 1805), pp. 46–9.

that she did not engage him directly and cast her volume more in the shape of a formal rebuttal. As one reviews the milieu of the *Reliques* and the resentment Macpherson had aroused in its godfather O'Halloran and the O'Conor so much admired by Miss Brooke, as well as in undoubtedly her whole literary circle, he wonders that she was so restrained in the defense of her country. Perhaps to the eighteenth century female it would not have seemed fitting to be otherwise.[86]

---

[86]Her reluctance to draw to herself the attention a direct challenge might have aroused may be inferred from her avoidance of publicity in connection with an earlier publication, her translation of a song and monody by Carolan, which appeared anonymously by her express wish in Walker's *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards*. Walker explained that he was enjoined to conceal the name of the translator, as she shrank from the public eye.

HAWTHORNE'S KNOWLEDGE OF DANTE

BY J. CHESLEY MATHEWS

Nathaniel Hawthorne could have read Dante in the original, for he had a sound knowledge of Latin,[1] and read Italian easily enough, although he never attained any proficiency in speaking it.[2] He learned the Latin before he graduated from Bowdoin College, in 1825;[3] but as Italian was not taught there so early, presumably he learned it at some later time. Julian leaves no doubt that his father knew Italian by 1857, but does not tell how long he had known it.[4] Neither is it clear when he first

---

[1]Julian Hawthorne, *Nathaniel Hawthorne and His Wife*, Boston, 1885, II, 266.

[2]*Ibid.*, II, 212; Julian Hawthorne, *Hawthorne and His Circle*, New York, 1903, p. 231. (*Cf.* also *Hawthorne and His Wife*, II, 146, 266.)

[3]I am indebted to Mr. Gerald G. Wilder, Librarian of Bowdoin College, for the information that when Hawthorne attended Bowdoin, Latin was required for admission into the freshman class and also throughout the first three years of college. See also James T. Fields, *Yesterdays With Authors*, Boston, 1889, p. 46.

[4]Sophia Peabody (Mrs. N. Hawthorne after 1842) studied Italian in 1828 or a little later, even though she did not learn to speak it (*Hawthorne and His Wife*, I, 61 f.; *Hawthorne and His Circle*, p. 231; G. E. Woodberry, *Nathaniel Hawthorne*, Boston, 1902, p. 83). In a letter to Sophia, dated "Jan. 22" (probably between 1823 and 1833), Elizabeth Peabody wrote: "I suppose that you go on with the Italian and I hope you will learn a vast deal this winter." And on Mar. 9, 1857 (nine months before the Hawthornes left England for the continent) Una wrote to her Aunt Lizzy: "Mama has got a great Italian Grammar, and she intends studying Italian in earnest. She and Papa are going to talk it together." (These quotations, from unpublished letters, have been graciously sent to me by Mr. Manning Hawthorne.)

A letter written by Mrs. Hawthorne on Oct. 7, 1867 (that is, after her husband's death), seems to indicate that she was interested in and fairly familiar with the *Divine Comedy*. She was writing to H. W. Longfellow to ask that he lend her his "translation of Dante." After saying that she had been "most desirous of seeing it and reading it ever since it was published," and that she would read it "steadily but studiously," she continued:

read any of Dante. The Bowdoin College Library seems not to have possessed a single copy of any of Dante's works while he was in college.[5] Moreover, in the various records we have of the reading he did at different periods in his life, records left by himself in his published writings, as well as those left by others, there is nowhere any mention of his having read anything by Dante.[6] But his sister-in-law Elizabeth, giving an account of his first visit to the Peabody home, in the summer of 1837,[7] says that they looked over a new five-volume set of Flaxman's outlines, "and talked of Homer and Hesiod, Aeschylus and Dante, with all of whom they [Nathaniel and his sisters] were per-

---

From all I hear, you have accomplished a most glorious book. I wish my husband were here to enjoy it. Yet what a vain and idle wish! when he is in the full blare of the Beatific vision himself—and I would not recall him for one instant from his Paradise. . . . I wish also to express my appreciation of the wonderful sonnets . . . concerning the Divina Commedia. You have caught the high and simple strain of the Poet you celebrate. They are as grand as the thunder and the sea roar and as statuesque as marble images of the gods.

(I am indebted to Mr. Manning Hawthorne for a copy of this letter.)

[5] *A Catalogue of the Library of Bowdoin College, 1863*, Brunswick, Maine, 1863, shows only two copies of *La Divina Commedia*, and the earlier of these was published in Italy in 1825. The printed catalogue of 1821 shows no Dante title.

[6] See G. P. Lathrop, *A Study of Hawthorne*, Boston, 1876, pp. 66 f., 73 f., 108, 129, 163 f., 339–343; *Hawthorne and His Wife*, I, 95 f., 105; Rose H. Lathrop, *Memories of Hawthorne*, Boston, 1897, p. 54; Hildegarde Hawthorne, *Romantic Rebel*, New York, 1932, p. 155; *Hawthorne and His Circle*, p. 127. But the fact that we have no positive statement that Hawthorne read Dante does not prove that he did not read him. He by no means mentions all of his reading; in fact, he says very little about the things he read. In his *Note-Books* he makes no mention of his reading, and "almost no allusion to works or to authors" (Henry James, Jr., *Hawthorne*, New York, 1879, pp. 44 f.).

[7] For date, see *Romantic Rebel*, pp. 89–92, and M. D. Conway, *Life of Nathaniel Hawthorne*, London, 1895, pp. 75 f.

fectly at home."[8] And from 1835 on, he referred to Dante about a dozen times in his writings.

His first reference to Dante, which was in "The Devil in Manuscript" (published in November, 1835), showed that he had at least some general conception of the *Inferno:*

> Now, what more appropriate torture would Dante himself have contrived, for the sinner who perpetrates a bad book, than to be continually turning over the manuscript?[9]

In "The Hall of Fantasy" (February, 1843), speaking of "statues or busts of men who in every age have been rulers and demigods in the realms of imagination," he mentioned "the dark presence of Dante."[10] Then in "Fire Worship" (December, 1843) he showed that he knew Canto XIII of the *Inferno:*

> Occasionally there are strange combinations of sounds,—voices talking almost articulately within the hollow chest of iron,—insomuch that fancy beguiles me with the idea that my firewood must have grown in that infernal forest of lamentable trees which breathed their complaints to Dante.[11]

Dante heard wailings coming from the trees and bushes in the forest of Circle 7 of the *Inferno;* and one of the plants made complaint to him, its words coming out like hissing air that is escaping from the end of a green log which is burning.[12]

In "Rappaccini's Daughter" (December, 1844) he spoke of a young university student's taking lodgings in Padua in

---

[8] An account of this visit, written by Elizabeth Peabody to Julian, was copied by him into a notebook, which, through the courtesy of Edith Garrigues (Mrs. Julian) Hawthorne, of San Francisco, I have been able to see.

[9] *The Complete Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne,* Fireside Edition, Boston, 1909, III, 578.

For date of this and other pieces, see N. E. Browne, *A Bibliography of Nathaniel Hawthorne,* Boston, 1905.

[10] *Works,* II, 197.

[11] *Works,* II, 166. The "hollow chest of iron" is a stove.

[12] *Inf.,* XIII, 22–44.

an old edifice which exhibited over its entrance the armorial bearings of an extinct noble family of that city. Our author goes on to say,

> The young stranger, who was not unstudied in the great poem of his country, recollected that one of the ancestors of this family, and perhaps an occupant of this very mansion, had been pictured by Dante as a partaker of the immortal agonies of his Inferno.[13]

Now Dante met only one person in Hell who was said to be a Paduan, and this one bore upon his money-bag his coat-of-arms, which Dante described;[14] this Paduan, too, was enduring the agonies of the Inferno, suffering, like the other usurers, from falling flakes of fire and hot sand.[15] That Hawthorne had in mind this particular sufferer seems to me certain. Then in *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) the passage,

> Doomed . . . , therefore, as Mr. Dimmesdale so evidently was, to eat his unsavory morsel always at another's board, and endure the life-long chill which must be his lot who seeks to warm himself only at another's fireside,

is probably an echo of Dante's lines in the *Paradiso,*

> Tu proverai sì come sa di sale
> Lo pane altrui, e come è duro calle
> Lo scendere e 'l salir per l'altrui scale.[16]

And in *The Blithedale Romance* (1852) he referred a second time to the forest of suicides of Canto XIII of the *Inferno:* one of the characters of the story says that he thought of warning a couple about to sit down beneath a tree in which he was sitting that a listener was present,

> by sending an unearthly groan out of [his] hiding-place, as if this were one of the trees of Dante's ghostly forest.[17]

---

[13] *Works,* II, 109.
[14] *Inf.,* XVII, 64–75.
[15] *Inf.,* XVII, 43–57.
[16] *Works,* V, 153 f. (in chap. ix); and *Par.,* XVII, 58–60.
[17] *Works,* V, 437; *Inf.,* XIII, 22–27.

In the *Italian Note-Books* (written during 1858 and 1859) he referred to Dante five times. Three of these references show nothing concerning his knowledge of Dante's works (he spoke of seeing the monument, with an "unimpressive statue of Dante" sitting above the sarcophagus, in the Church of Santa Croce;[18] remarked that one of the frescos in the Bargello was a portrait of Dante;[19] and told of seeing at Mr. Kirkup's in Florence two fourteenth-century manuscript "copies of Dante," a plaster cast of Dante's face, and a tracing of the Giotto portrait).[20] But the fourth reference suggests that he may have read the *Paradiso:* he said that one of the manuscript copies of Dante which Mr. Kirkup showed him "was written by a Florentine gentleman of the fourteenth century, one of whose ancestors the poet had met and talked with in Paradise."[21] And the fifth reference definitely alludes, I believe, to a passage in the *Purgatorio.* In his account of a visit to the lake and town of Bolsena, on October 15, 1858, Hawthorne wrote that he had had for dinner some fish from the lake,

> Not, I am sorry to say, the famous stewed eels which, Dante says, killed Pope Martin, but some trout.[22]

It seems that he had read the passage,

> E quella faccia
> Di là da lui, più che l'altre trapunta,
> Ebbe la santa Chiesa in le sue braccia;
> Dal Torso fu, e purga per digiuno
> L'anguille di Bolsena e la vernaccia;[23]

but that by a lapse of memory he had forgotten that Dante neither mentioned the Pope's name nor stated that stewed eels killed him.

---

[18]On June 28, 1858. *Works,* X, 337–341.
[19]On July 16, 1858. *Works,* X, 370 f.
[20]On August 12, 1858. *Works,* X, 386–388.
[21]*Works,* X, 391.
[22]*Works,* X, 475.
[23]*Purg.,* XXIV, 20–24.

Finally, in *The Marble Faun* (1860), there are four passages to be considered. In the first, a Dante edition is simply mentioned:

> They parted on the lawn before the house, the Count to climb his tower, and the sculptor to read an antique edition of Dante, which he had found among some old volumes of Catholic devotion, in a seldom-visited room.[24]

The second passage occurs two pages later:

> 'But, shall we climb your tower?' [asked Kenyon.] . . .
>
> 'Come, then,' said the Count, adding, with a sigh, 'it has a weary staircase, and dismal chambers, and it is very lonesome at the summit!'
>
> [The sculptor remarked:] '. . . let us rather say, with its difficult steps, and the dark prison-cells you speak of, your tower resembles the spiritual experience of many a sinful soul, which, nevertheless, may struggle upward into the pure air and light of Heaven at last!'
>
> Donatello sighed again, and led the way up into the tower.[25]

The climbing of the difficult steps, the dark prison-cells, and the spiritual experience spoken of recall in a general way the journey through the dark, "blind prison" of Hell[26] and up the mountain of Purgatory,

> Dove l'umano spirito si purga
> E di salire al ciel diventa degno.[27]

More particularly does the climbing of the weary staircase of the tower remind one of Dante and Virgil's journey from the center of the earth to the shore of Purgatory, which was a long and difficult ascent.[28] Moreover, Dante's was a sinful soul, struggling upward.[29] And

---

[24] *Works*, VI, 290.

[25] *Works*, VI, 292.

[26] *Inf.*, III, 23, 75; IV, 10, 69; V, 28; etc.; *Inf.*, X, 59; *Purg.*, XXII, 103.

[27] *Purg.*, I, 5–6.

[28] *Inf.*, XXXIV, 95, 136.

[29] Dante was so far lost that even in heaven it was feared that he was beyond redemption (*Inf.*, II, 64–66); he was in a way which

the phrase "into the pure air and light of heaven" is in harmony with Dante's poem; when he had completed the climb from Hell, the first thing said of Purgatory was,

> Dolce color d'orïental zaffiro,
> Che s'accoglieva nel sereno aspetto
> Del mezzo puro insino al primo giro,
> A gli occhi miei ricominciò diletto,
> Tosto ch'io usci' fuor de l'aura morta.[30]

When it is considered that only two pages earlier Hawthorne had had Dante in mind, influence from Dante in this second passage appears probable. A third passage in *The Marble Faun,*

> And now the broad valley twinkled with lights, that glimmered through its duskiness, like the fire-flies in the garden of a Florentine palace,[31]

may be in part a reminiscence of Dante's pretty simile:

> Quante il villan, ch'al poggio si riposa,
> Nel tempo che colui che 'l mondo schiara
> La faccia sua a noi tien meno ascosa,
> Come la mosca cede a la zanzara,
> Vede lucciole giù per la vallea,
> Forse colà dove vendemmia e ara:
> Di tante fiamme tutta risplendea
> L'ottava bolgia.[32]

And the fourth passage is the following:

> [Kenyon is speaking:] '. . . an antique painted window, with the bright Italian sunshine glowing through it! There is no other

---

never left person alive (*Inf.*, I, 26 f.). But Virgil came to lead him through Hell, up to Purgatory, that he might ultimately reach Heaven (*Inf.*, I, 112 ff.; *Purg.*, I, 4–6). And Dante was desirous of salvation (*Inf.*, I, 130 ff.); he had already by himself sought to regain the right way (*Inf.*, I, 13–30) even before Virgil appeared to him.

[30] *Purg.*, I, 13–17; *cf.* also the phrase "al ciel ch'è pura luce" (*Par.*, XXX, 39). And Donatello's leading the way up recalls Dante's line,

> Salimmo su, el primo e io secondo (*Inf.*, xxxiv, 136).

[31] *Works*, VI, 309.

[32] *Inf.*, XXVI, 25–32.

such true symbol of the glories of the better world, where a celestial radiance will be inherent in all things and persons, and render each continually transparent to the sight of all.'

'But what a horror it would be,' said Donatello, sadly, 'if there were a soul among them through which the light could not be transfused!'

'Yes; and perhaps this is to be the punishment of sin,' replied the sculptor [Kenyon]; 'not that it shall be made evident to the universe, which can profit nothing by such knowledge, but that it shall insulate the sinner from all sweet society by rendering him impermeable to light, and, therefore, unrecognizable in the abode of heavenly simplicity and truth. Then, what remains for him, but the dreariness of infinite and eternal solitude?'

'That would be a horrible destiny, indeed!' said Donatello. . . .

'But there might be a more miserable torture than to be solitary forever,' [he continued]. 'Think of having a single companion in eternity, and instead of finding any consolation, or at all events variety of torture, to see your own weary, weary sin repeated in that inseparable soul.'

'I think, my dear Count, you have never read Dante,' observed Kenyon. 'That idea is somewhat in his style.'[33]

Now Hawthorne's associating bright sunlight and color with the glories of the better, celestial world, and his associating absence of light with the horrible lot of unpardoned souls in the next world, clearly suggests the use in the *Divine Comedy* of light and darkness and color.[34] And

---

[33] *Works*, VI, 349 f.

[34] Dante's Hell is within the earth, and has no light from sun, moon, or stars. Dante spoke of "l'aere sanza stelle" (*Inf.*, III, 23), of being able to see "per lo fioco lume" (III, 75), and of coming into a place "d'ogni luce muto" (V, 28). (See also XV, 17–21; XXVI, 25–32; XXXI, 10.) And there is in Hell little in the way of color, besides the everlasting gloom: Satan's faces are whitish-yellow, red, and black (XXXIV, 39 ff.); the color of fire is implied in the circle of burning tombs, for example (Cantos IX–X), and that of blood and pitch in two other circles (Cantos XII and XXI–XXII). Purgatory, on the other hand, is in the open air, has the light of the sun (which throughout the *D.C.* is a symbol of enlightenment or righteous choice—*Purg.*, I, 107; and Grandgent's note), moon, and stars, and is adorned with beautiful colors. (See *Purg.*, I, 13–39, 107 f., 115–117; II, 1–24, 55–57; VII, 70–81; XXVII, 133–135, and the description of the Earthly Paradise, Cantos XXVIII–XXXI.) And in the Heavens the souls appear as translucent images or lights

the thought of two sinners who are guilty of the same sin and inseparable companions in eternity immediately suggests to one both Dante's Paolo and Francesca, and his Ugolino and Archbishop Ruggieri.[35] One is inclined to believe, if one considers the situation in *The Marble Faun* (two lovers, sharers in a crime, are suffering terribly because of their own guilt and also because each knows of the other's suffering), that Hawthorne was thinking especially of the lovers Paolo and Francesca.

The evidence, then, shows that Hawthorne certainly read the *Inferno,* presumably all of it, by 1843—probably by 1835; and strongly suggests that he read the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* too. Whether he read in Italian or in translation does not appear; but since he could read Italian at least in the latter part of his life, and since he recognized that "translations are never satisfactory,"[36] one would suppose that he did at least part of his reading in Italian. The evidence seems to indicate also that he appreciated the allegorical fitness of the different punishments of the *Inferno* to the different classes of sinners punished there, and Dante's symbolical use of light and darkness; and one may assume that, with his great interest in moral symbolism and the soul of man, he found much in Dante congenial to himself.

---

more or less bright according to their degree of grace (*Par.*, III); each of the celestial spheres is bright with light (V, 94–96, for example); the happiness of the souls manifests itself as light (V, 133–139); the souls form beautiful constellated figures of themselves (Cantos XIV, XVIII); and all the celestial universe is illuminated by light originating with God, who himself appears as a point of light (XXVIII, 16–18). Note, too, in the Empyrean, which is pure light (XXX, 39), the colors: the glowing river, its banks painted with spring, the living sparks, flowers like rubies encompassed with gold, etc. (XXX, 61 ff.); the pure white rose with yellow center, etc. (XXXI).

[35] *Inf.*, V and XXXII–XXXIII.

[36] *Works*, IX ("The American Notebooks"), 28.

CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN'S THEATRICAL DÈBUT

BY EDWARD G. FLETCHER

When Emma Stebbins was writing the life of her friend, Charlotte Cushman, "the most powerful actress America has produced . . . one of the great American women of the mid-nineteenth century,"[1] she was able to tell about her heroine's first appearance on the stage in Boston in 1835 by quoting from a memorandum by Miss Cushman herself about her earliest Boston experiences.

This told how, through the interest of a retired sea captain, an acquaintance of her dead father, she took singing lessons from a protégé of the captain, how, when the Woods (two English singers of extraordinary abilities) came to Boston and made inquiries for a contralto to perform one or two duets with Mrs. Wood at a Saturday evening concert, Captain Mackey recommended her to their attention, how, through the interest of another of her father's friends, she was given "two years of the best culture that could be obtained in Boston at that time, under John Paddon, an English organist and teacher of singing, the principal teacher of his time. This was the foundation of my after success . . . ," how, through the influence of Mrs. Wood, probably the finest English singer of her day, she became an articled pupil to James G. Maeder, musical director for the Woods, and how, finally, she made her first appearance at the Tremont Theatre as Countess Almaviva in *The Marriage of Figaro,* "considered a great success," and a second appearance as Lucy Bertram in *Guy Mannering.* Except for a few additional details, little more than this has found its way into print about Charlotte Cushman's theatrical début, the début of one of the greatest of American actresses.

The fame of even the greatest actresses is evanescent; without the most elaborate documentation it lives little

---

[1]Walter Prichard Eaton, *Dictionary of American Biography,* V, 2.

longer than the memories of their audiences. The lives of the greatest actresses become more obscure than their fame. In the business of their triumphs their earlier efforts are (often deliberately) forgotten; frequently their memoirs never get written, or, if written in old age, are anecdotal, sketchy, and inaccurate. Already Katharine Cornell and Helen Hayes, in full career, have seen to the preservation of an account of their own early years in the theatre.[2] Charlotte Cushman, by every account, was no less great an actress. The present article, gleaned chiefly from the Boston newspapers of 1835, is a zealous effort to assemble new information about one of the most important episodes in the life of Miss Cushman, her first steps towards her later magnificent success.

In December, 1834, Maeder had married the youthful and fascinating Clara Fisher, who as a juvenile actress had been the wonder of her time. Early in April, 1835, Mrs. Maeder and Miss Charlotte Watson, "an actress in miniature, and very pretty singer of simple music,"[3] began an engagement at the Tremont Theatre, Boston. Mrs. Maeder opened on April 6; Wednesday, April 8, the third night of her engagement, was also, as the advertisement announced, Miss Cushman's first appearance on any stage. The bill was *The Marriage of Figaro,* with Sebastian played by Rice, Figaro by Comer, the Count by Smith, Susanna by Mrs. Maeder, and the Countess by Miss Cushman; this was followed by *The Pet of the Petticoats; or, The Convent of St. Eloir.*

For a beginner, Miss Cushman immediately received an extraordinary amount of attention. To begin with, her appearance had been heralded by a paragraph in the *Daily Advertiser and Patriot:* "She is said by the best musical judges to possess an extraordinary voice of great compass, rich, flexible, and sweet," which was followed by

---

[2]Katharine Cornell and Ruth W. Sedgwick, *I Wanted to Be an Actress,* 1939, and Catherine Hayes Brown, *Letters to Mary,* 1940.

[3]W. W. Clapp, *A Record of the Boston Stage,* p. 341.

a statement on the thirteenth that her first appearance had been "successful beyond the expectations of those who admired her vocal powers on former occasions." The *Daily Evening Transcript* referred on the eleventh to her "brilliant and successful début."

The *Daily Atlas* for April 11 carried a long review:

> When a new actor appears, it is but natural for him to wish to hear what the public think of him; a wish that is seldom gratified. The notices written on such occasions are usually any thing but a fair expression of the general opinion, or even of that of the writers themselves. As we have nothing to gain or lose by saying what we really think of the young lady whose name is at the head of this article, we shall certainly do it, and shall neither use the trowel nor the tomahawk.
>
> Miss C. appeared as the Countess . . . under some disadvantages. We had already had the unrivaled musical talent of Mrs. Wood, and it was too near the end of the season to expect a very good house. However, it was unusually well filled, and by such an audience as would have been sure to damn a bad performer, by faint praise. She was cordially received, and enthusiastically applauded. There is but one opinion expressed in and out of the house, and that is, that Miss C's success was brilliant.
>
> The lady evinced much timidity at her first entrance, and was not wholly assured throughout the piece. She did not pitch her voice quite high enough for the house, and she put rather less energy into her part than it would bear. Then she did not know what to do with her train, and this is all the fault we could find in her. Mrs. Wood said of this young person that her voice was naturally superior to her own, and only needed cultivation. Without going that length, we are bold to think that it is extremely powerful in its high notes and sweet in its lower ones, and is under command to a degree that is astonishing in so young a performer. We do not say it cannot be improved by study and practice, but we do assert, without fear of contradiction, that even at present it is far superior to that of any American performer who has trod our boards. She does honor to her teacher, Mr. Maeder.
>
> Miss C. also evinced talent of a very respectable character, as an actress. She has a good person, showed a just conception of her part, and trod the stage with the grace and dignity proper to her assumed rank. Her style was her own; we could observe no appearance of imitation. On the whole, if there is musical taste and knowledge in this community to appreciate a really fine singer, which we

very much doubt, the lady will be generally and deservedly a great favorite.

It would be unfair to conclude, without saying that the rest of the *dramatis personae* showed a very kind and generous spirit toward the new rival near the throne, assisting and supporting her with their best endeavors. . . .

There was also a long review in the April 18 issue of Isaac Pray's periodical, *The Boston Pearl and Literary Gazette:*

They who visit not the Theatre can scarcely be informed of the interest which Miss Cushman created, on the evening that she appeared. . . . The house was full and full of anxiety—all appeared interested; and could not have been otherwise, for seldom is there an occurrence of this kind. All seemed to feel concerned in the success of a native of our city—all were ready to encourage her during her timidity and to excuse blemishes in style naturally incident to the excitement of the occasion; ay, and even to do more than this, if necessary. But there was no such necessity. Miss Cushman was successful without the advancements of extraneous aid—she was triumphant by herself; and, doubtless, conscious of her own power, she had determined to exhibit the character of the Countess, as she had conceived it, and to demand the crown of the victor. Nor was Miss Cushman to be careful of her success as an actress merely. She was to appear as a vocalist, in a part that not long since was impersonated by transatlantic performers of high standing both here and at home;—and as a vocalist, too, she was successful, displaying a voice of much compass and strength, sweetness and flexibility—its highest attribute, *potency*, whose conquests can scarcely be numbered—nay, not anticipated.

It has been said by some one that Miss Cushman has "much to learn." It is a remark, scarcely worthy of notice, when we remember that we all have much to learn—that this working-day world is continually opening to us new situations and scenes—that every day brightens and tends to perfect the mirror in which we behold ourselves, so that we may see more clearly how far removed we are from perfection. It becomes Miss Cushman rather, to unlearn much —to forget the styles of acting and singing which for four or five years past she must have beheld, and to take her parts, as it might be, from the author, giving them all the force and character which her cultivated understanding and refined sensibility can command. Let her not take the best of those as her models whom she has seen latterly, and whom she has in remembrance. Let her ambition

be to be first in her profession and an ornament to our city—forgetting not in the freshness and newness of her personations and efforts to notice truth and nature—those eternal beacons on the changing sea of fashion. Let judgment regulate the execution of cavatinas, and her bravuras be appropriate and with meaning. Simplicity, it should be remembered, will charm, and science should not be disgusting.

For several months past Miss Cushman has been receiving instruction from Mr. Maeder, a gentleman from whose guidance she has received much benefit. When one or two years' experience has confirmed and given character to her style, we trust, it will be our fortune to speak of her as the first vocalist of the country. We do not expect to be disappointed in our anticipation, for we think that flattery, if she be flattered, will not injure her—but that as her discrimination daily expands before her new sources of study in the art, and new difficulties, she will be aware how distant from mortal accomplishments is Perfection—and that she will continue to strive in her profession for the elevation of dramatic music in this country.

Finally, her appearance resulted in the publication in the *Transcript* on April 13 of a statement by her former teacher, Paddon:

I feel in every respect happy at the favorable reception which Miss Cushman experienced on her first appearance, and I attended the Theatre on purpose to welcome her. Seeing, however, that she is announced as a pupil of Mr. Maeder, I shall just state for the information of all whom it may concern, how much instruction she had received, during her five years' study, before any such name as Maeder was heard of in this city; and as everybody knows (who is at all acquainted with singing) that a voice cannot be brought out as Miss Cushman's is, in as few months, it will easily be perceived how much credit is due to Mr. Maeder.

Between five and six years ago, Mr. George O. Farmer who was then my pupil, good naturedly went to Charlestown where Miss Cushman then resided, and did the best in his power to instruct her; soon after this I was applied to by her mother, and had consented to receive her as a pupil. Articles for a term of years were drawn up by a regular Attorney, and Miss Cushman remained at my house while her mother went Eastward. On her return, I did not feel disposed to sign for reasons not necessary to mention, I had, however, given her considerable instruction. Miss Cushman then became a pupil of Mr. Hansen,—and sang at his Concerts; then I understood Mr. Comer was about to bring her out on the stage.

What other assistance she received, I do not know, but to my surprise, I was applied to by the same gentlemen who wished to befriend her, to receive her again as a pupil. This I consented to, and for about nine months caused her to *study hard*, and all who heard her were surprised at her progress, singing as she did some most difficult Italian and English music. At the end of this period she had the permission of her patron and myself to go for two weeks to New York, and finding she did not return after two months' absence, both her patron and I came to the conclusion that it was useless to expect a favorable result from either his liberality or from any exertions, and therefore we cancelled an agreement for three years, which had been signed by all parties. Can it be supposed that a few months' teaching has done much to improve her without her previous advancement being the *substantial cause*. Had the young lady conducted herself as my pupil the accomplished and *absolutely perfect* singer, Miss Emma Gillingham did, I would have made her *equally perfect*. Miss Cushman has, however, still *very much* to learn, and I hope sincerely she will make her fortune.

This communication caused at once what has been referred to as a violent newspaper war, although it was hardly a war, and certain not violent. The *Atlas* pointed out that the *Transcript* had printed "an ill-natured note," to which the *Transcript* replied that Paddon's "note" had been inserted and paid for as an advertisement, and that if a reply was called for, its columns were open to Mr. Maeder, Miss Cushman, or anyone else on the same terms Paddon had accepted (that the advertisement was a piece of Counting House business with which the editor had nothing to do):

We do not . . . discover in it any ill-nature, or if there be any, it will find apology and exculpation in the arrogance that assumed the credit of having been the preceptor of an accomplished scholar, when it is notorious that the pupil had passed the best days of her tutelage under other masters. Towards Miss Cushman, we entertain no sentiment that is not entirely in accordance with an earnest desire that the career she has just entered upon with so much eclat and such encouraging promise of success, may be continued until she reach the summit of her profession, and enjoy in their fullness, all its honors and rewards.

The *Atlas* answered this with a paragraph of apology for not having made its meaning clear, calling Miss Cushman "a lady of . . . much accomplishment and talent," and the whole affair ended with a very brief note to the *Atlas* from Paddon: "Be assured I only feel for Miss Cushman a very sincere, and indeed *anxious* desire for her success."

All this came from Miss Cushman's first appearance, and, because of the course of her later career, has much more than the ephemeral interest that is usually found in the first notices of a promising beginner's début. Who cay say to what extent such praise may have stimulated her to live up to its predictions of a brilliant career, or how much her apparently casual attitude towards the training her singing teachers tried to give her may have affected the later loss of her ability to sing?

Her second performance was on Monday, April 13, when Miss Watson, just recovered from some sort of indisposition, made her first appearance in Boston. A playbill for the performance in the Harvard Theatre Collection contains more information about it than the papers. The bill was *Charles the Second* followed by *The Marriage of Figaro:* "Miss Cushman having been received with Enthusiastic applause will repeat the character of the Countess . . . with the following Songs, Cavatina—Sweetest Idol.—Second time in Boston. Grand Scena from the Maid of Judah—Fortune's Frowns. Duet—How Gently—With Mrs. Maeder."

"Miss Cushman renewed the favorable impressions of last week," the *Atlas* commented on the fourteenth, adding the next day, "Miss Cushman improves upon her audience. She at present labors under the embarrassment consequent upon the novelty of her situation; than which no feeling can be more destructive of the efforts of a vocalist. She will, however, soon acquire that stage ease which habit alone can give, and her really great musical powers will then be exerted with double their effect." "Miss Cushman made her second appearance on Monday evening last," the *Pearl*

reported, "and was less embarrassed than on the previous occasion, giving full satisfaction to her friends and the public."

Her third appearance was on Tuesday at Mrs. Maeder's benefit, when she sang Louisa in *The Duenna.* A Harvard Theatre Collection playbill calls attention to two of her songs—the romantic ballad, "O Give Me by[4] Arab Steed," and a recitative and air, "Tho' from Thee I Now Depart." In the opinion of the *Pearl:*

> Although the opera was miserably performed, and torn to tatters, yet Miss Cushman's part was sustained with much spirit, and she assisted the dull plot, to the end, sufficiently to secure it from exciting absolute disgust. Indeed, had it not been for Louisa, Don Carlos, Isaac, and the songs of Clara, the performance would have been entirely condemned.
>
> Miss Cushman, we trust, will make it a study to acquaint herself with the best style of singing—not that most in vogue. Although ready applause may be obtained by following the fashion, yet her ambition should raise her above the seeking of it, and correct taste should not be sacrificed for a boon so meagre. Rather may she study to be natural in her music than artificial. . . .

Miss Watson's benefit came on Thursday and closed the brief season of opera. Miss Cushman again sang the Countess in *Figaro.* A note in the *Transcript* that day referred to the youthful Emma Wheatley's opening performance at the Tremont the night before: "A childish attempt at imitation of Miss Kemble . . . may be excused on the score of her being the only tolerable imitatress of that inimitable actress, from Miss Duff to Miss Cushman."

April 22 was set for Miss Cushman's benefit, but, as the papers announced on the twenty-first, this was postponed to the first week in June, "from circumstances over which . . . [she] had no control, and which were wholly unforeseen by her . . . " "in order that she may appear in the character of Cinderella."

The benefit took place Thursday, June 4. The bill consisted of *Guy Mannering; or, The Gipsy's Prophecy* (in

---

[4]For *My?*

which, in dramatic form, she later achieved such great distinction) with Rice playing Henry Bertram, Leman Colonel Mannering, Johnson Dominie Sampson, Andrews Dandie Dinmont, Smith Dirk Hatteraick, and Miss Cushman (her first appearance in the character) Julia Mannering. During the evening she sang "Rise, Gentle Moon," "Here's a Health," and "Swift as the Flash." The performance concluded with the third act of *Cinderella; or, The Fairy and the Glass Slipper,* with Miss Cushman playing the title rôle. This seems to have been a substitution for *Katharine and Petruchio,* in which, originally, she had intended to play the part of Katharine, and probably to imitate Fanny Kemble. This rejected plan is mentioned in the *Pearl,* and confirmed by a Harvard Theatre Collection playbill for April 21.

"Miss Cushman . . . ," the *Pearl* reported, "appeared, we think, quite as well as an actress as she did the first three or four nights of her previous performances. She was, however, by no means perfect in her execution of the music, and will need to study much more before she can compete with stars of the first magnitude. As an actress she needs grace. . . ."

Her last appearance was at the benefit of Mr. and Mrs. Smith on June 8, when she seems to have done no more than "sing Bishop's celebrated Bravura, 'Trifler Forbear.' "

A few of these appearances have been previously noted, but no one has pointed out that Miss Cushman also performed at the Tremont that October.

Mr. and Mrs. Wood and W. F. Brough, a bass who was making his first tour in America, began an engagement there on October 1. On October 6 the bill was *The Marriage of Figaro* followed by *No Song, No Supper,* a musical farce which the *Transcript* advertisement said was being performed in Boston for the first time in three years. Miss Cushman sang the Countess in the former; Margaretta (her first appearance in the character) in the latter.

The *Boston Daily Advocate* reported on the eighth: "Miss Cushman made her first appearance this season on Tuesday evening. She has not improved since last year; her voice is flat, and she evidently *labors*, and sings with great effort; she should remember that ease is the charm of singing." The *Atlas* was of about the same opinion: "In spite of the severe storm the Tremont was well filled on Tuesday evening, and Miss Cushman was warmly received. We observe, however, but little improvement in her singing and none in her acting. It is, however, no faint praise to say that she appears well even beside Mrs. Wood."

On the seventh, Wood's benefit, Miss Cushman appeared as Lucy Bertram in *Guy Mannering* (Mrs. Lewis payed Meg Merrilies); on the ninth, Brough's benefit, as Lucinda in *Love in a Village;* and finally, on the fifteenth (this was advertised as her last appearance) as Lady Allcash in *Fra Diavolo; or, The Inn of Terracina,* and as Margaretta in *No Song, No Supper.* In the former, a Harvard Theatre Collection playbill informs us, she had a solo, "Oh! What a Frightful Land for Strangers," and, besides concerted pieces, took part in a duet, "No, No, No, I Will No Longer Stay," a trio, "Bravi! Bravi! Bravi!" and two quintettes, "Oh! Rapture Unbounded," and "With Gratitude Now Blended."

Not long afterwards, presumably, Miss Cushman, under the baleful influence of Halley's Comet, left for New Orleans, to lose her singing voice, but only to attain a greater fame.